THE
Merry Tales of the
Cobler of *Canterburie*.

As hee passed from Billingſ-gate *to* Grauesend.

WITH

An inuective against Tarltons *newes* out of Purgatory.

TOGETHER

VVith his deſcription of the eight orders of *Cuckolds*.

Newly publiſhed at his owne coſt: without the helpe *of the Shoemakers*.

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1614.

The Coblers Epiſtle to *the Gentlemen Readers.*

Hall, a Hall (Gentlemen) roome for a Cobler, here comes the quainteſt Squire in all Kent; The Cobler of *Canterbury*, armed with his Aull, his Lingell, and his Laſt, preſents himſelfe a iudiciall Cenſor of other mens writings: but mee thinkes for my ſaucineſſe, I heare *Appelles* boy crying, *Ne Sutor vltra crepidam.* If I doe ſee his maſter mend the fault in the legge, Ile abide their frumpes, and when he hath done, Ile ſay, this had not beene corrected but for the Cobler. Becomes not many a Tinkar a tall Pratler? and haue not men of my trade waded ſo deepe in the ſecrets of Theologie, that they haue ſought to correct *Magnificat?* and then (by your leaue Gentlemen) may not the Cobler of *Kent*, who hath beene the patron of many good companions, & toſt ouer a paire of Cards at Trump from morning till night, now to be admitted ſo farre as to finde fault with *Richard Taritons newes out of Purgatory?* Yes, and if he that writ it will not amend the latchet, Ile on with my night-cap and my ſpectacles, and make him ſhape the legge righter ere I haue done.

I confesse tis a Booke, and so the Colliers Iade of *Croydon* a horse, as well as the Courtiers Courser: yet by my faith it hath a faire Title: but if *Diogenes* saw it he would cry out as he did against *Minda*, stop your Citie that it runne not out of the gates; and infer a like inuectiue against the booke, for that the title containes more then the Pamphlet: but yet in faith there is pretty stuffe in it, but vnworthy *Dick Tarltons* humor: somewhere too low iests, somewhere too high for stile: if I distinguish like a Scholler, Gentlemen, thinke that I was borne when the Popes butter-flies were abroad: & it may be some Frier was my father: and the rather I gesse it, for that nature hath wrought that vpon my crowne, that he had on his by Art: for before I was twenty I had a bald pate. Well, howsoeuer, I haue found fault, & therefore I haue attempted to amend it, not in the correcting of his worke, but in setting out one more pleasant, & more full of delightfull tales for all mens humors; except those which are so humerous that they count nothing gratious; but that is too graue. What? a dog hath a day: *Semel in anno ridet Apollo.* Longer liues a merry man than a sad; a Cobler hath lesse cares then a King: and an houre past in honest mirth, is worth a tunne full of melancholy. Why were Tauernes inuented, but to ripen mens wits? And why were tales deuised, but to make men pleasant? Tush, when *Redde rationē* comes, I feare me there will be lesse account to be giuen for honest recreation, then eyther for enuious practises that solemne Saturnists ruminate; or for the sundry schismes the melancholy michers doe publish. If my

principles

principles be falſe, let no man take exceptions, but paſſe them ouer with a ſmile: for tis but Coblers Philoſophie. But I digreſſe, and therefore to my Booke, wherein are contained the tales that were tolde in the Barge betweene Billinſgate and Grauef-end: imitating herein *old Father Chaucer*, who with the like Method ſet out his *Canterbury* tales; but as there muſt be admitted no compare betweene a cup of Darby Ale, and a diſh of durty water: So ſir *Ieffery Chaucer* is ſo high aboue my reach, that I take *Noli altum ſapere* for a warning; and onely looke at him with honour and reuerence. Here is a gallimaufrie of all ſorts, the Gentlemen may finde *Salem*, to ſauour their eares with ieſts, and Clownes plaine Dunſtable dogrell to make them laugh, while their leather buttons flie off. When the Farmer is ſet in his Chaire turning (in a winters euening) the Grabbe in the fire, here he may heare how his ſonne can reade, and when hee hath done, laugh while his belly akes. The old wiues that wedded themſelues to the profound hiſtories of *Robin Hood*, *Clim of the Clough*, and worthy ſir *Iſembras*, may here learne a tale to tell amongſt their goſſips. Thus haue I ſought to feed all mens fancies: which if I doe, was it not well done of a Cobler? If I offend, and they thinke there is in it neither rime nor reaſon, why a Cobler did it, and there's an end.

Farewell, from my Shop
whereſoeuer it be.

Robin Good-fellowes Epistle.

A Cobler become a corrector! ho, ho, ho: it was not so when Robin Good-fellow *was a Rufler, & helpt the Country wenches to grinde their Mault: Then Gentlemen, the Plough swaine medled with his Teame: the Gentleman with his Hound and his Haulke: the Artificer with his labour: and the Sholler with his Booke: euery degree contented him within his limits. But now the world is growne to that passe, that Pierce Plow-man will prie into law, nay into Diuinitie, and his dunceries must needs bee doctrine: tush, what of higher powers? what of Vniuersities? the text doth put downe them,* Babes & Sucklings, *and no more. This makes* Robin Good-fellow *that was so merrie a spirit of the buttery, to leaue all, and keepe himselfe in Purgatory, for Hospitalitie is so cleane runne out of the countrey, that he needs not now helpe the maydes to grinde their mault, for the drinke is so small, that it needs little Corne: and if he should helpe them, where he was wont to finde a messe of creame for his labour, scarce get a dish of sloat Milke. Why, see you not how cranke the Cobler is, that will forsooth correct* Dick Tarltons *doings, a man famous in his life for merry conceits, and especially for a booke of my publishing? Well Gentlemen, if you suffer it, and* Dick Tarlton *pocket it vp without reuenge, or a drie blow at his breech,* Robin Good fellow *makes a vow, to haunt him in his sleepe: and after his olde merry humor, so to play the knaue with the Cobler, that he shall repent he medled so farre beyond his latchet: but I will carry my friend these news to Purgatory, where I know for anger, he will almost breake his taber, and will not rest till he haue reuenged: we will lay both our wits together, to put downe the prating Cobler, and here I make a vow, either to get the conquest, else neuer to come in your sight: and to say as I was wont: What, Himp and Hamp? here will I neuer more grinde nor stamp.*

Yours in choller, *Robin Good-fellow.*

THE COBLER of Canterburie.

OR

Canterburie Tales.

SItting in the Barge at Billinſgate, expecting when the tide would ſerue for Grauel-end, diuerſe paſſengers of all ſorts reſorted thither to goe downe: at laſt it began to ebbe, and then they cryed away, when I came to the ſtaires, though I was reſolued to goe downe in a Tilt-boat, yet ſéeing what a crew of mad companions went in the Barge and perceiuing by the winde, there was no feare of raine, I ſlept into the Barge and tooke vp my ſeate amongſt the thickeſt: with that the Barge-men put from the ſtaires, and hauing a ſtrong ebbe, becauſe there had much raine water fallen before, they went the more merrily downe, and ſcarce had we gotten beyond Saint Katherines, but that a perry of winde blew ſomething loud, that the watermen hoyſt vp ſailes, and laid by their Oares from labour. Being thus vnder Saile, going ſo ſmugly downe, it made vs all ſo merry that we fell to chat, ſome of one thing and ſome of another, all of mirth, many of knauery, that if Cato Cenſorius had béene there, he would either haue laughed at their knauiſh Ieſts, or riſe at the confuſion of their prattles, which ſéemed like a very Chaos of ſundry conceites. As thus euery man was ſtriuing to paſſe away the time pleaſantly, a Gen-

tleman puld out of his sleeue, a little pamphlet, and began to reade to himselfe: amongst the rest, my selfe was so bold, as to aske him what booke it was: mary quoth he a foolish toy, called Tarltons newes out of Purgatorie: at this they fell to descanting of the booke, some commended it highly, and sayd it was good inuention, and fine tales: tush quoth another, most of them are stolne out of Boccace Decameron: for all that, quoth the third, it is pretie and wittie. As they were thus commending and discommending, there sate by an ancient man that was a Cobler in Canterburie: Maisters, quoth hee, I haue read the booke, and tis indifferent, like a cup of bottle ale, halfe one and halfe the other: but tis not merrie enough for Tarltons vaine, nor stuffed with his fine conceits: therefore it shall passe for a booke, and no more. No, no, what say you to old father Chaucer? how like you of his Canterburie tales? are not they pleasant to delight, and wittie to instruct, and full of conceited learning to shew the excellencie of his wit? All men commend Chaucer, as the father of English Poets, and said, that he shot a shote which many haue aymed at, but neuer reacht to.

Well, quoth the Cobler, now that wee are going to Grauel-end, and so (I thinke) most of vs to Canterburie, let vs tell some Tales, to passe away the time till wee come off the water, and we will call them Canterburie Tales. To this motion, the whole companie willingly consented, and onely they stood vpon this, who should begin: If it be no offence, quoth the Cobler, to other gentlemen that be here, I my selfe will be ring-leader: to this they all agreed, and the Cobler began to settle himselfe: yet before I begin, I will (as neere as I can) describe vnto you what manner of man he was.

The description of the Cobbler.

HIs stature was large and tall,
His limbs well set withall,

Of

Of a ſtrong bone, and a broad cheſt,
He was wide and wildeſome in the breſt,
His forehead hie and a balde pate,
Well I wot hee was a mate
That loued well a bonny laſſe,
For the Clownes eyes were as gray as glaſſe:
And oft haue I heard my mother ſay,
The wanton eye is e're moſt gray.
He loued well a cup of ſtrong Ale,
And his noſe was nothing pale:
But his ſnout and all his face,
Was as red as Ruby or Topace:
A voyce he had cleare and loud,
And well he can ſing to a crowd.
He was a ſtout ſturdy ſquire:
And loued eke day good compire:
Drinke he would with euery man,
In cup, cruze, glaſſe or kan:
And what euery day hee got
Hee hoorded vp in the Ale-pot,
That all Canterburie gan leere,
To talke of this merry Cobleere:
Therefore now marke mee well,
For thus his tale began to tell.

The Cobbiers Tale.

Contayning the ieſts that paſſed betweene the Prior of Canterburie, and a Smith of Saint *Auſtins.*

THE Prior of Canterburie had a couent of Friars Auguſtines, that were endued with great liuings from the King, and he himſelfe had great reuenewes, that he liued like a Potentate, and he was had in great eſtimation, through-

throughout al the Citie: Liuing thus at eaſe pampred vp with delicates and idlenes, the two nurſes to Lechery, he minded not ſo much his Booke, but that paſſing one day through the ſtreetes, he glanced his eyes to ſée where he might finde ſome handſome Trull that might be his paramour: many he ſaw, and many he liked, but at laſt comming by a Smiths Forge, he eſpyed a proper tall woman meanly attired, after the pouertie of her husband, but of ſuch a beautifull viſage, and faire countenance that ſhée pleaſed greatly the Priors eye, that he thought her the faireſt in all Canterbury: he returned home that way héé went out, becauſe héé would haue another looke at the Smiths wife, and as he paſſed by, héé gaue her a curteſie for his farewell. Well, home he went to his chamber, and there bethought him of his new Loue, and caſt in his minde a thouſand wayes how he might come to his purpoſe: At laſt, he ſent for the Smith to come looke vpon his horſe, who very haſtily hied him to the Priory, where the Prior welcommed him, and entertained him with great curteſie, killing the Nurſe (as the ould Prouerbe is) for the childes ſake, and making much of blacke Vulcan for faire Venus ſake, the poore Smith very carefully lookt to the horſe, and where ought was amiſſe, amended it: The Prior and all his Couent gaue him great commendations and thankes, and bad him to breakefaſt, where he had good chéere and ſtore of ſtrong drinke, which made the Smith paſſing pleaſant: as they ſate at breakefaſt, the Prior told him, ſith they had made experience of his ſkill, and that he was cunning about horſes, he was content to make him Farrier of the Priory. At this the Smith was very glad: nay more, quoth the Prior becauſe thou ſhalt haue more gaines out of the Doore, ſéeing thy wife is a good cleanly woman, ſhe ſhall be Landreſſe for me, and the whole Couent. The Smith hearing this, perceiued by the weathercocke, which way the winde blew, ſhakt the head, and began to ſmile: the Prior be-

demanded of him why hée laught? mary sir, quoth hée, séeing we are at meate, and mirth is good for digestion, I will tell you a merry iest. There was such a poore man as my selfe, that dwelt (as I doe hard by a Priorie, and he had brought vp in his house a little Lambe, which growing to a sheepe, would wander all abroad, and returned home safe at night without any hurt: at last, this little sheepe, being the poore mans treasure, séeing the Priorie gate open, and the yard full of grasse, went in, and fedde there. The wanton Friers that were idle, would often sport with the Lambe, and play withall, and pulled off the woll off the backe, that it had almost left nothing but the bare pelt: which the poore man espying, kept vp his sheep, and would not suffer it to goe any more abroad: yet it had gotten such a swéet sauour in the Priorie yard, that assone as it brake lose, it would thither, where the Prior and the Friers spying it againe, consented, and eate it vp all: The good man came to aske for his sheepe, and they laughing at him, gaue him no other amendes but the hornes: so my maisters, if my wife should be your Laundresse, I warrant you if I came to enquire for her, I might haue such fées as the poore man had for his losse: No no, I am well I thanke you, if my selfe may serue for a Farrier, so it is, but my wife (of all men) shall not haue to deale, either with Prior or Friars. At this they all laught, but the Prior not willing to giue ouer the chase thus, made this answere. Why smith (quoth he) thou art a fole, thou maiest haue a priuiledge for that, for though shée wash our clothes, yet shée shall neither fetch them nor bring them home, neither shall there euer a Friar come at thy house, onely the Scull of the kitchin, and I hope thou feares not him. No quoth the Smith, they be these bráchelesse yeomen that I stand so much in doubt of: but vpon these conditions aforesaide, that shée shall neither fetch them, nor carry them home, she shal be your Laundresse. Vpon this

they agréd, and the Smith went to his house and tolde his wife all. Shé that was a wily wench, thought with her selfe, that whatsoeuer her husband filcht for hér should catch a frogge; and that dealt he neuer so warily, yet she would make him one of the head men of the Parish, as well as his neighbours. She coniecturing thus with her selfe: the next morning came the Scull early (by that the Smith was vp and at his worke) with foule clothes, God spéd sir quoth hé, I haue brought your wife the Priors linnen; ah welcome good fellow, quoth hé, goe thy wayes vp to the chamber to my wife, she is aboue, and I thinke a bed: the Scull trotted vp the staires and saluted the woman: Mistris (qd. he) the Prior hath sent you his clothes and praies you that they may be done on wednesday next: they shall be done, quoth she, with all spéede: and quoth the Scul, his worship wild me in secret to giue you a Ring for a token, & to desire you to thinke that he loues you as heartily as any woman in the world; the poore woman séeing a gold Ring, and hauing neuer had any before in her life, held her selfe a proud woman, and bethought her what good gifts shé should dayly haue if she had such a Louer as the Prior: wherefore she returned him this answere by the Scull, that she had euer thought well of him, but her husband was a iealous fole & watcht her narrowly whereseuer she went, but as farre as shé might she was at his command. Home went the Scull, and the Prior was risen by that hé returned, and askt him what newes: what newes quoth the Scull? mary thus sir, assone as I came to the doore I found the Smith hard at his worke, and I saluted him by the time of the day, and asked him where his wife was, saying, I had brought the Priors linnen, goe vp the staires good fellow (quoth he) for I thinke my wife is in bed, and sir there indéed I found her, and surely sir, if you will beléeue mé, me thought she lay to louely in her bed to lye with a Smith; so sir I gaue her your token and told her

what

what you bad me, and she made answere that your worship was the man who shee had euer thought well of, but her husband was a iealous foole, yet as farre as she could she was at your command This satisfied the Priors expectation: and on Wednesday morning when the Scull should goe for his cleane linnen, the Prior compounded with him, and gaue him a brace of angells to kéepe his counsell saying, Tom (for so was the Sculles name) thou knowest all flesh is fraile, and we are men as well as others, though our profession be more holy, therefore Tom so it is, that I haue ioued the Smiths wife a long time, & now may I haue opportunity to fil my desires, I will this morning take thy clothes on and besméere my face, and with the basket hie for the cleane clothes, onely I care for nothing if thou kéepe my counsell. Feare not that sir, quoth the Scull; but I will be so secret as you can desire; with that the Prior was briefe because hée longed to be there, and on with the Sculles ragges, and taking the basket on his necke, hasted him very orderly to the Smiths house, by that time day did appeare, where he found him hard at worke, God morrow sir quoth the Prior, I am come for the linnen, goe vp the staires fellow quoth the Smith, thou commest very earely my wife is yet in bedde. Vp trudged the Prior, and there he found his paramour in a swéet slépe, the Prior stept to her and kist her, and with that she awakte, and séeing the Scull, why how now sir sawce, quoth she, can you not speake before you come vp? my husband is a wise man to send such companions vp into the chamber where I am in bedde, twere no matter and the match were equall to make him weare the horne for it. Oh, be content good Loue, quoth the Prior, for know thou, that I am not Tom Scull; but the Prior himselfe that sent thée the Ring, who for thy sake is come thus disguised, with that he discouered himselfe, and she perceiued it was he, and blusht: hée kist her, and so coniured her, that whiles the

poore Smith was knocking at the Smithie, hee had dubd him knight of the forked order, and for feare of suspition, putting his linnen in the basket, away he went, bidding the Smith farewell. Thus the Prior and the Smithes wife contented, and enioying their harts desire, the poore Smith loued her not a whit the worse, neither did he suspect any thing: for the blind eates many a flie, and much water runnes by the Mill that the Miller wots not of: so playde it with this Smith: for twice a weeke came the Prior, in his Sculles apparrell, to his Lemmon. Thus it continued, till on one morning the Prior was not well, so that he could not goe, but Tom Scull, after his wonted manner, went to carry forth the linnen: and as hee went by the way, he began to thinke with himselfe what a faire woman the Smithes wife was, and how faine he would be partaker with his maister. Hammering this in his head, on hee went to the Smithes house: How Smith, quoth he, good morrow, is thy wife vp? no quoth the Smith, but she is awake, goe vp and carry your linnen a Gods name: vp came the Scull and rushing in at the chamber doore, threw downe his basket, and seeing the chamber darke that hee could not be discouered, slipt to bed, and entred commons with the Prior, and with that got him away without saying one word: The Smithes wife marueiled at this, and supposed that hee had heard some rustling, and for feare of her husband, had gone away so hastily. Well, within two daies after came the Prior againe, and after his accustomed manner went vp with his basket, and saluted her after the old fashion: I pray you tell me maister Prior, quoth she, what meant you the other morning that you came so quiet, and slipt away with such silence after you got out of bed? by this the Prior perceiued that the Scull had cut a shiue on his loafe, and so thought to dissemble the matter. Faith sweet heart quoth he, I heard a noise, and thought it had béene thy husband that had come vp: so I continued, quoth

the

the Smiths wife, and therefore after you were come, seeing you were frighted with your owne shadow, I laught hartely: thus as long as they durst they chatted, but at last the Pryor up with his basket and away. When hee came home, in a great chafe hee sent for the Scull, and made inquirie of the matter, the poore fellow afrayd of fore threatnings, confessed the matter and craued pardon: but the Pryor forgetting his patience, fell vpon poore Tom the Scull, & beat him so sore, that he had almost kild him: and afterwards swearing him on a Booke, if euer after he went with any cloathes, he should goe no further then the chamber doore. The Scull agreed to this, and confirm'd it with a solemne oath: but the remembrance of his sore blowes, bred in him a minde to reuenge: whereupon resoluing to doe any mischiefe to the Prior that he might, one day he went very orderly to the Smith, and carried him to the Ale-house, and there after a long protestation of silence, reuealed the whole matter vnto him, how the Pryor euery day came in his apparell to his wife, and so made him weare the hornes, while hee was busie about his hammers: at this the Smith fetcht a great sigh; alas quoth he, and am I a Cuckold? why not you quoth the Scull as well as your betters? indeed quoth the Smith, and that is all the comfort that I haue, that my betters haue had as hard hap: for the Abbot of S. Peters that is an holy man, had but one Lemman, and yet she was not content with twenty mortels: and I am a poore Smith and a lay man, no maruaile then if my fortune be as forked as the rest: but by the holy Rode of Rochester quoth he, I will be so reuenged on the Prior, that after I haue taken him, he shall hate Lechery the worse while he liues, I quoth the Scul, take heed thou plaguest not mee instead of the Prior. To auoyd therefore all insuing danger, if I come to morrow, thou shalt know mee by this token, I will aske thee whether thou hast drunke this morning or no: if thou hearest no such watch word, then know it is

the Pryor. So be it (qd. the Smith) and vpon this they drunke their drinke and departed. The next morning the Smith was earely at his worke, and the Pryor that longed to be with his Lemmon was allone awake, and vp hee got, and on with the Sculs apparell, and to the Smiths house, and after his accustomed manner bade him good morrow, and vp the staires. The Smith perceiuing it was the Prior, because hee wanted his watch-word, hied vp presently after him, and toke the Pryor in bed with his wife: why how now Scull quoth he? will no worse meat goe downe with you then my wife? Before you and I part, I will learne you how to make Vulcan of mee, without you were more like Mars then you be. Whereupon his man and he (two lustie knaues) crept to him and puld him out of bed, and thrust him into a great sacke, wherein he was wont to put chaffe: when hee had done, carried him into the street, and laid him downe before his doore, and then made his wife take a flaile in her hand, and thresh as hard as shee could: but because shee perceiued her strokes were layd on with fauour, himselfe stood behind her with a great Carters whip, and euery time shee fainted in her blowes, hee lent her a lash, that hee fetch the blood through her peticoat: the people that came by, marualled at this Antike, & askt the Smith what he was a doing: killing of fleas quoth the Smith, that I found this morning in my bed, and because my wife is so idle, and will not strike home, I stand with my whip to whet her on. Neighbours therefore giue good eare and marke the end, and see when my wife hath beaten them enough what foule fleas they bee, and by my example learne whensoeuer you take such great fleas in your wiues bed, to put them to the like punishment. The people flocked together to see this sport, and although the Prior was almost brayed to death (though for fauouring of him the Smithes wife bore many a lash) yet he durst not cry, for feare of farther discredit, but lay

still

ſtill and ſuffered all with patience. At laſt a multitude of people flocking together, it chanced that by a ſerious buſineſſe, the Abbot of Saint Peters came by, who ſeeing ſuch a throng, ſent one of his men to know what the matter meant. Oh may it pleaſe you Lordſhip quoth the Smith, ſuch a ſight as you neuer ſaw, wherefore for Chriſts ſake, I aſke it, that you would take ſo much paines as to come ouer the way and ſee: the Abbot ſtept ouer the channell, and when hee came and ſaw the Smiths wife with her flaile, and him with his whip, hee wondred, and the Smith told him as the reſt, that it was a flea that he tooke in his wiues bed: all this while lay the Pryor with a heauy heart, for feare the Smith would ſhake him out of the ſacke: wiſhing to abide twice ſo much torment, ſo hee might eſcape vnknowne. As the Abbot, about this matter, ſtood queſtioning with the Smith, the Scull that miſt the Prior that paſt his boure, thought the Smith had playd ſome mad prancke with him, went and put on the Priors apparell, and his Coule ouer his head that he might not be knowne, and went downe to the Smiths houſe-ward, where ſeeing a concourſe of people, he haſted him thither. At laſt the Smith eſpyed him and cryed, Oh my Lord Abbot, ponder comes the Pryor of Saint Auſtins, it was one of his fleas. Well knew the Smith it was Tom Scull, but his wife ſuppoſing it to be the Pryor, and that he in the Sacke was the Scull that had deceiued her, in deſpight for reuenge layd on ſuch blowes that ſhe needed no whipping to mend her ſtrokes. When the Prior came, and after moſt humble maner had ſaluted the Abbot, he deſired to know the cauſe of that ſight: Mary quoth the Smith, Maiſter Prior, I may thanke you for this, for a flea of your Priorſe hath leapt from the Dorter to my wiues bed, and finding it there this morning I put it into a ſacke, and cauſed my wife to threſh it, and for that both you and maſter Abbot, and all my neighbours ſhall ſee what

parlous fleas oft happen into womens beds, I will shake him out before you all, and with that unbound the sacke, and he threw out the Prior, who being in the Sculs apparell, was so besmeard and so bloody, that he could not be knowne: Looke here master Prior, quoth the Smith here is the Scull of your Priorie. Oh notable knaue, knaue quoth Tom Scull, to discredit our house. What thinke you of this my Lord Abbot? Is this a sufficient punishment or no? considering by this fault he shall giue occasion of slaunder to the whole Priory? He is quoth the Abbot, within the iurisdiction of your censure, and therefore deale with him as you list. Mary quoth the Scull, then thus: because it is an open fault, it shall haue a more open punishment, for if it be smothred vp thus, they will say that I am a fauourer of sinne: with that hee cald to certaine of his couent, for most of the Monkes of the Priory were come thither, how say you brethren qd. he, is it not best that he stand all this forenoone on the Pillorie, and haue a paper written on his head, containing the whole matter of his offence? and the Smiths wife shall stand vnder him with her flaile, & the Smith with his whip: and so quoth the Smith shall all Canterbury laugh at mee that come into the market place, to proue my selfe a Cuckold. No goodman Scull quoth he, it shall not be so, & with that he pold of his Cole, and said, Maisters and neighbours, sée, héere is the Scul of the house, and this, beaten in the sacke, is the Prior himselfe, that came to my wife in the Sculs apparell: at this all the people clapt their hands, laught, and made good game to sée how simply the Prior stood, and in what a maiestie the Scull sate in the Priors abilliments. At this sight the Abbot abasht, and the Friers were ashamde: but the Scull nothing amazed, began afore all the people to say thus: My Maisters quoth he, I was once a Scholler, though I am now a Scull, and then I learned this olde saying in Latin, Caute, si non Caste: Liue charily, if not chastely. Be not so forward in your follies

follies that you discouer your faults to the whole world: and especially was this spoken to men of the Church, for in that they know much, and doe dehort others from vice, the people loke their liues and their learning should agree: but when they offend so grosely as Master Prior, through his ill example, to bring a whole house in slaunder, then are they worthy of double punishment: For we know Fryers are men, and I warrant you, there is a great many in England haue done as much to others as he hath done to the Smiths wife, & yet haue scap'd without discredit: I hope my Lord Abbot, if you enter into your owne conscience, you can berite as much, and therefore seeing he was so carelesse of his credit, let him for euer after (to auoyd perpetuall infamy of the house) be banisht out of the Priory. To this they all agreed, and the people that heard this collation, said Tom Scull was worthy to bee Prior, whereupon the Abbot and the Friers consenting, and seeing hee had good learning, turned away the olde Prior and made Tom Scull Prior in his roome: thus was the Prior punisht for his Lechery, the Smith reuenged for his Cuckoldry, and the Scull for his blowes, stumbled on a good promotion.

At this merry tale of the Cobler, all they in the Barge laught, and said the Smith was well reuenged: yea, but quoth the Cobler, so he was made a Cuckold, and with a heauy head was the poore Smith faine to goe to his hammers, being euer after noted for a Cuckold through all Canterbury. There sate a Smith hard by, who grieued at this, that he should descant so vpon his occupation, and the rather perchance he toke pepper in the nose, because hee was of the same fraternitie, if not with a Prior, yet with some other good fellow, and therefore in a snuffe he began thus to reply. Why Cobler quoth he, doest thou hold the Smith in such derision because he was a Cuckold? I tell thee Cobler, Kings haue worne the hornes: and

tis a fault that Fortune exempteth from none: yea, the olde writers haue had it in such question, that they haue set downe diuers degrées of Cuckolds: Yea marry quoth the Gentleman, Tarlton in his Purgatory hath deuided them into thrée sorts. Tush quoth the Smith, Tarlton was a fole, or he that writ the Booke, for to tell you truth, there be eyght degrées, and that I can proue. At this there was a great laughter, and euery man desired him to tell what they were, that I will quoth the Smith, they be these:

The eight order of Cuckolds.

Cuckold
1 Machomite.
2 Heretike.
3 Lunaticke.
4 Patient.
5 Incontinent.
6 By consent.
7 By Act of Parliament.
8 Innocent.

And because (quoth the Smith) they may séeme darke and obscure to you, I will briefly make an exposition of them to you, and that in this manner.

The Exposition of the eight degrees of Cuckolds.

1 Cuckold Machomite is an ancient Cuckold, who hath béene married some thirtie or fortie yéeres, and euer since his first marriage hath continued content in that estate, being so knowne and notified amongst his Neighbours, therefore being the eldest he is the formost.

2 Cuckold Heretike, is hee that hauing a faire wife and honest, is so blinded with iealousie and suspition, as he thinks her to be as dishonest as the best, but indéed is none, and therefore consumes himselfe as an heretike.

3 Cuckold

3 Cuckold Lunaticke is he that being a Cuckold, conceiues such inward griefe that he suffers his passions to take no rest, but as a man distrackt from his senses, doth all things so out of order, as though he were a Lunaticke: and therefore hath this title for his humors frenzie.

4 Cuckold Patient, is he that being simple of himselfe dares not controll the vnbridled affections of his wife, and so with patience doth suffer himselfe to be cornuted and therefore is called, Cuckold Patient.

5 Cuckold Incontinent, is hee that marries himselfe to a wife of a light disposition, who maketh him a Cuckold the very first day of his marriage.

6 Cuckold by consent, is he that of all other Cuckolds is most infamous, who is not only headed as bravely as the rest, and hath one of light conversation, but fostereth his wife vp in her follies, and is content to kæpe the doore to his wives lasciuious wantonnesse, consenting to more then the strumpet is ashamde to performe.

7 Cuckold by Act of Parliament, is such a one that when hee taketh his wife faultie, is not content secretly to punish the offence, but goes to law with the man for recompence: the Quest giuing him perhaps for damage some i.d.ob. whereby it is registred in the Court by his owne proofe that hee is a Cuckold: and therefore is hæ called Cuckold by Act of Parliament.

8 Cuckold Innocent, is when a yong man marryeth a Mayd or a Wife, whom he supposeth to be a mayd, and yet hath playd false before, and perhaps hath had a child e or two: in marrying him to such a one, hee is called, Cuckold Innocent.

Thus quoth the Smith you haue heard my degrées, and

and their exposition: and because I will be quit with the Cobler for the Tale of the Smith, giue me leaue a little and you shall heare a merry Iest, but because I will let you know what manner of man he was, before his Tale heare his description.

The description of the Smith.

THis Smith was a quaint fire,
As merry as Bird on brier.
Iocund and gleesome at euery sith,
His countenance aye, buxome and blith,
His face full coaly and full black,
Hued like vnto a Colliers sacke,
Or as if it had beene soile in the mier,
Full of wrinkles was his cheeks with the fier:
Well he could sweat and swinke,
And one that aye loued good drinke,
For hard by his Forge alwayes stood
A stond of Ale nappy and good:
Which made the coulour of his nose
Like to the fire when it glowes:
His head great, his browes broad,
Able to beare a great load,
As no man might holde it scorne
On his head to graft a horne.
His coates were fit for the weather,
His pilch made of Swines leather:
So was his breech, and before
A dusty apron he wore:
Wherein not to faile
Was many a horseshooe naile,
And for to fit him euery tide,
Hung a hammer by his side:
Thus attired, the Smith gan say
What befell on a Sommers day.

The

The Smiths Tale.

Contayning a pleaſant Ieſt of a iealous Cobbler, and how for all his ſuſpicion, he was cunningly made Cuckold.

IN Rumney Marſh, by the Sea coaſt, there dwelled a Cobbler, a merry fellow, and of middle age: who was wont on working-dayes, to chaunt it out at his worke, and on holy-dayes to beſtir his ſtumps in the Church-yard ſo merrily after a crowde, that he was well beloued of all the Country wenches, and noted for the flower of good-fellowſhip throughout all the Pariſh. This Cobler keeping ſhop for himſelfe, had in houſe with him an olde mother of his, who being as it were his ſeruant, deſirous to liue more at eaſe, wiſht him to take a Wife: the Cobler was loath to be perſwaded to marriage, and the reaſon was, for that hee feared to be a Cuckold: yet at laſt he caſt his eye on a Country laſſe, that was a blithe and bonny wench, and the chiefe of all the Mayds of olde Rumney: to her was this iolly Cobler a ſuter, and after a little woing (as women muſt be got with prayſes and promiſes) the Cobler caught her, and married they muſt be in all haſte: which done, they liued pleaſantly together, as ſoles doe preſently after their wedding: but after the hony-moone was paſt, ſhe like a good huſwife, fell to her worke, to ſpin, and carde, and ſuch other deedes of huſwifery as belonged to the profite of her houſe: the Cobler loued her well, and ſhee wanted nothing that might ſatiſfie her humour, onely ſhe was charged by her huſband, not to goe abroad a goſſepping with her neighbours: in ſo much, that eyther on working-dayes or on holy-dayes when all the wiues in Rumney went to be merry, ſhe was faine (as a poore priſoner) to keepe home: which although ſhee paſſed ouer with ſilence and patience, ſo yet ſeeing his iealouſie was without cauſe, ſhe bowed with her ſelfe if euer a friend and opportunity ſerued to her minde, to make him weare

the horne an inch longer then all his neighbours: but he kept her short from that, for every day when she was at home, shee sate by him in the shop where hee sang like a Nightingale, having his eye never off his wiues face; or if she sate within, her mother in law an old iealous woman bore her company, if shee went to fetch water, her mother was at her elbow, whatsoeuer she did, or whither soeuer she went, to be briefe, her husband, or his mother was at one end, which grieued the yong woman: So suspicious and iealous was the Cobler, that all Rumney talked of his folly: and to vexe him as they passed by, would say to him; Ah neighbour, good morrow, now that you haue gotten a faire wife, we hope to haue you one of the brotherhood, and that the Cuckow in April may sit and sing on your house, as wel as with your poore neighbors, I feare not that quoth the Cobler, let her do her worst, I will giue her leaue, meaning that hee kept such narrow watch ouer her, as he could neuer be deceiued, and therefore euery day his wife sitting by him when he was pearking of his shoes, and she at her wheele, then he would chant out this song:

The Coblers song.

WHen as the Nobilitie pull downe their towers,
Their mansion houses and stately bowers:
And with stone and timber make Hospitalls free:
Then the Cobler of Rumney shall a Cuckold be.

When Gentlemen leaue off their peacockly sutes,
And that all their workes are charities fruites:
Tendring the poore which needy they see,
Then the Cobler of Rumney a Cuckold shall be.

When Vsurers run vp and downe with their gold,
And giue it to them from whom it was pould:
And Colliers sacks ouer great you doe see,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When

When Weſtminſter Hall is quite without benches,
And Southwarke Bankeſide hath no pretty wenches,
When in Smithfield on Fridayes no iades you can ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Maides hate marriage, and loue to liue chaſte,
Virgins forſooth till foureſcore be paſt:
And loue not that yong men their beauty ſhould ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When wiues are not willfull, but needes will obay,
When ſilent and ſpeechleſſe they ſit a whole day:
When Goſſips doe meet, and no words will be,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When womens tongues doe ceaſe for to wagge,
And ſhoomakers giue not their maſters the bagge:
When Cuckolds and Keepers want hornes for their fee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Tapſters and Ale-wiues from *Barwick* to *Douer*,
Fill thirdindeall pots till the drinke run ouer.
When the quart is ſo full that no froth you can ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Smiths forſweare to drinke of ſtrong ale,
And liue without liquor whiles their noſe be pale:
When in Vintners wine no mixture you ſee,
Then the Cobler, &c.

When Dutch-men hate butter, and the Spaniards pride,
When Cardinals doe want a Trull by their ſide:
When the Pope like *Peter* humbled you ſee,
Then the Cobler of Rumney a Cuckold ſhall bee.

Euery day did the Cobler vſe to ſing this ſong, and there dwelled next vnto him a Smith that was a tall and

a yong lusty fellow, proper of personage, of a comely visage, curteous, gentle, and debonary, such a one as this Coblers wife could haue wished to her Paramour, if time and opportunitie would haue fauoured her fancie: and the Smith seeing what a smicker wench the Coblers wife was, & what a iealous foole she had to her husband, sorrowed at the good fortune of the Cobler, that he had so faire a wife, and wished that hee could finde meanes to haue such a one his friend. Upon this, being next neighbours, & their houses ioyning together, the Smith would oftentimes (when his leysure serued him) come to the Coblers shop and talke with him; where betweene the Smith and the Coblers wife passed such glances, that he perceiuing there was no want, but place and opportunitie to fulfill their desires. One day amongst the rest, Fortune so fauoured this young couple, that the Cobler went forth to buy Leather, and left his mother and his wife in the shop: the old woman not hauing slept the last night, was heauy and fell asleepe, and the young woman sate singing at her worke. The Smith perceiuing this, layd by his hammers and went to the Stall, where he saluted his neighbour, & she returned him the like curtesie.

At last, seeing the olde beldame was sure, he began to reueale vnto her, how long he had loued her, and how hee was sorry that she was combred with such a one, as for his iealousie, aboue all other men deserued to be made a Cuckold: sundry speeches past betweene the Smith and the Coblers wife, till at last shee rose, and gaue him her hand, that shee loued him better than any man in the world, and would (if any occasion would serue) euer striue to content him. Then sweet heart, quoth he, doe me but this fauour, faine to morrow some occasion to goe to your mothers, and come on the further side of the way fast by such a doore, and then let me alone for opportunitie to satisfie both our desires. To this shee agreed, and the Smith went to his shop: presently the olde woman

awaked,

awaked, the Cobler came home, and all was well.

At night, when they were in bed taking him about the necke, she kist him, & tolde him that certaine of her friends met to morrow at her mothers, and that she would faine goe and see them, I pray you good husband, quoth she, let your mother and I goe together, I will not part out of her sight, neither will wee make any long tariance: the husband for shame could not deny this request, but granted it: whereupon the next morning she got her vp, and on with her holy-day apparell, and made her as fine as fine might be: the Cobler seeing his wife so trickt vp in her cleane linnen, began to be iealous, and called his mother aside, and charged her by that loue shee bare him, not to let his wife part out of her company till shee came home againe, which shee promised with an oath: so away they went, and the Cobler he sate him downe and beganne to sing.

The Smith, that all this day was not idle, had compounded with an olde woman, by whose house shee must passe, to fauour them with house roome, and reuealed vnto her all the matter: whose wife it was, and how hee would haue his purpose brought to passe: by my troth sonne quoth she, I haue heard much talke of that iealous Cobler, and I would doe my endeauour to make the asse weare a horne: vpon this they resolued, and she lik't well of his policie, and sayd, loue had many shifts: at last, the Smith spyed his mistresse all in her bravery, comming with her mother in law: the olde wife was ready, and as shee past by the doore, threw a great bowle full of bloody water, right vpon her head, that all her clothes and cleane linnen was marred, being so betrayed that shee could goe no further. Alas mistresse quoth the olde woman, I cry you mercy, what haue I done? full sore it was against my will: but for Gods sake come into the house, and shift you with cleane linnen: if you haue none at home I will lend you of the best that I haue: goe in daughter, quoth

her old mother in law it is a chance, and against a shrewd turne sometime, no man may be: Ile goe home as fast as I can, and goe fetch you cleane linnen, the whiles drie you your gowne, and make all things else ready. I pray doe good mother quoth she, & then away goes her mother in law: and as soone as shee was out of doores, the olde woman led her into an inward parlour where the Smith was, and there these two lovers by this pollicie made the jealous Cobler weare the horne.

Whiles thus they were solacing themselues, the olde wife she came stumbling home, and for haste had like to breake her necke ouer the threshold, her fall made the Cobler start: and when he saw it was his mother, and that he missed his wife, hee was halfe mad, asked his mother hastily where shee was: the old woman short winded, was almost out of breath, and for a good space sate puffing and blowing to fetch winde; at last shee cryed out: alas deare sonne, such a chaunce as never was hard off: as we went through old Rumney hard by the Church, a woman threw out a bowle of bloody water right vpon your wives head, which hath so berayed her linnen & her gowne, that she could go no further, and so I as fast as I could, came running home for cleane clothes: oh for the passion of God mother quoth he, hie to her chest, and get her clothes ready, for it may be a fetch to make the poore Cobler a Cuckold; a horne mother is soone grafted: with that the olde woman got all in readinesse, and away ran the Cobler and his mother together. Well the two lovers out at a little hole kept good watch & warde, that anone they spied where the Cobler and his mother came trudging: in went his wife, & sate her downe by the fire, where the Cobler found her onely sitting with the olde woman in her peticoate, drying her gowne, assone as she saw him she wept: and he, although he grieued at the mischance, yet for that he spyed her in no company, he was satisfied, and wisht her to be content, and sent for a pot of beare or

two to make her drinke: and after he had seene all well, and his wife in her cleane apparell, setting them a little on the way; home hee went againe to his shop, and his wife went to her mothers, where an houre or two shee past away the time in chat, and then returned home with her mother in law. Thus the Cobler was not suspicious of his wives being abroad, but tooke her misfortune for a chance, and the Smith every day according to his wonted custome, would come and chatte with his neighbour the Cobler, and sometime found opportunity to talke with the wife, but never out of the shop: on a day the Cobler being from home, and the olde woman within pacing of her hose, the Smith came to the shop, and finding her alone, began to lay a plot, how to make her husband a Cuckold, while he held the doore, shee promist if he would devise it, shee would put it in practise, and so agréed, they concluded betwéene themselues, and they brought it cunningly to passe, thus:

It chanced within a fortnight after, that as the Cobler and his wife lay in bed, shee fell on a great laughter, her husband demaunding the cause, shee made him this answere, I will tell you husband a strange thing: so it is, that this other day, when you went to buy Leather, my mother and I sate in the shop, & she fell fast asléepe, your neighbour the Smith he (as his custome is) came to the windowe, and séeing my mother a sléepe began to court me with faire words and large promises, and told mee, that if I would finde the meanes, that when you were out, I would let him lye with me, he would giue me fortie shillings. I chakt him off as wittes I could, but hee would haue no nay at all, but threw foure angels into my lappe, whereupon I tooke the golde, for mee thought they were foure sayre pieces, and promised him that to morrow you went forth and my mother too, and then he should finde mee alone in the chamber. Upon this he went away, and left me the golde, & therefore if it please

you,

you, to morrow I thinke good you should faine your selfe to goe abroad and my mother too, and then hide you in a chamber hard by, and as soone as he is come in, you may stand at the doore and heare all our talke: and when you heare mee consent, then breake in, and take the Smith, and swinge him well, and I warrant you husband, there will diuers commodities rise of it: for not onely we shall haue this gold, and get more for amends, but euer after be rid of such a knaue.

This motion pleased the Cobler well, and the rather because the Smith profest to be his great friend, and yet would seeke to doe him such disgrace: vpon this conclusion they resolued and so fell asleep. The next day in the afternoone, the Cobler fained himselfe to goe out, and his mother with him, and after comming home, at a backe doore went vp into the next chamber and hid themselues. By and by according to promise came the Smith: and went roundly vp to the chamber, where hee found the Coblers wife: wherefore strait shutting the doore with a boult on the inside, hee fell to set vp plumes on the Coblers head-piece, the Cobler hee very easily got to the doore with a great Pollax in his hand, and began to listen: with that he heard the Smith offer sayre to his wife: nay (quoth she) I haue kept promise with you, for I onely promised to let you vp into my chamber: tush qd. he, this is but a cauill, and many words past betweene them: the Cobler and his mother standing at the doore, with her nay, and his yea, till the Cobler had a new brow-antler growne out of his olde hornes, & then she answered him, seeing nothing would content him, he should haue his pleasure: with that the Cobler was ready to rush in, but that his mother staid him, and bid him heare further: and doest thou meane good faith, quoth the Smith? yea, wherefore else (quoth the Coblers wife) came wee into this place: why then (quoth the Smith) heare what I will say to thee: Doest thou thinke, though wee be heere in secret, that our faults

will

will not be seene openly: that though thy husband knowes not of it, and that it is kept close from the world, that there is not one aboue that sees all, and will reuenge it: yes vilde strumpet as thou art, and for this cause came I to trie thee: thou hast an honest man to thy husband, who loues thee more dearely then himselfe, and works hard to sustaine thee that thou shalt not want, and wilt thou in his absence wrong him? thinke if euer thou dost it, it will come out, and thou shalt bee punished with open shame: I am thy husbands dearest friend, with whom I am daily conuersant, and dost thou thinke I could finde in my heart to offer him such iniurie? no, and then art not thou more to blame, that being the wife of his bosome, wilt betray thy husband, who is dearer to thee then all friends? fie vpon thee vilde woman, fare thee well and amend: I will not tell thy husband, vnlesse I spie thee prowe light, but I shall neuer thinke well of thee while I liue, and with that he opened the chamber doore, and the Cobler chopt in, and taking the Smith by the hand, said, Neighbour, I thanke you for your good counsell, I haue heard all the communication that past betweene you and my wife, and truely, and with that the Cobler wept, I am heartely glad I haue such a trustie friend, to whom in my absence at any time, because my mother is an olde woman, I may commit the ouersight of my wife: and truely neighbour, quoth he, I pray you thinke neuer the worse of her, for shee told me the whole matter, and appointed mee to stand at the doore, that when you should haue offered her any discurtesie, I might haue rusht in & haue taken you: so that I perceiue you are as honest as she, and she as honest as you, and that your meanings were both alike. I am glad of that quoth the Smith, that you haue so vertuous a wife, I hope I haue done the part of a friend to pleasure my neighbour: you haue done so, quoth the Cobler, and therefore ere we part wee'le drinke a quart of wine. So the Cobler bestowed good cheere on

the Smith, and euer after accompted him for his friend, and whensoeuer he went out of Towne, committed the charge of his Wife to the Smith, who at all times had frée egresse and regresse to the Coblers house, without suspition.

This tale of the Smith made all the company to laugh, and the Cobler he was starke mad for anger, saying: that if it had béene his case, hee would haue giuen him Wine with a Cudgell: tush Cobler, quoth the Smith, neuer thinke but our art can surpasse yours in such wenching matters, and that the Smith can soner make a Cobler a Cuckold, then a Cobler a Smith: vpon this they fell to iarres, and from words had faine to blowes, if they of the Barge had not parted them: so at last they were quiet, & made friends. And then the Cobler he began to intreat that they would go forward in their merry exercise. wherupon a Gentleman sitting by, said, masters, it is so good to passe away the time, that to continue so honest a sport, I will be next: and thus therefore I will describe him.

The description of the Gentleman.

His stature was of a middle length,
Well ioynted, and of a good strength;
Siken vvrites report to vs,
Was that Troian Troilus:
For he was of a comely visage,
And his manners of a curteous vsage.
His haire in curled lockes hung downe,
And vvell I wot the collour was nut browne:
And yet it vvas full bright and sheene,
Such vvore Paris I weene,
When he sailed to Græcia,
To fetch the faire Helena.
His front was of a siluer hue,
Powdred thicke with veines blue.

His

His eyes were luminous,
Chriſtaline and beauteous,
Gray and ſparkling like the ſtarres,
When the day her light vp ſparres.
His cheekes like the Lillies white,
Or as Luna being bright:
And yet comely, thereupon
Was ſhaddowed cullour Vermillion,
That gazers all woulden ſuppoſe
How the Lilly and the Roſe,
Did maken warre each with other.
His ſuercoate was of Satten blew,
Like vnto a louer true:
His hoſe were garded along,
With many broad and veluet thong.
His cloake grew large and wide,
And a faire whinniard by his ſide.
The pummell guilt, and on his head
He had a bonnet cullord red:
An alder leefer ſwaine I weene,
In the Barge there was not ſeene:
And then thus he began to tell,
What in Cambridge a Scholler befell.

The Gentlemans tale.

Containing the contrary fortunes that a Scholler of *Cambridge* had in his loues.

IN the Vniuerſitie of Cambridge, in Peters Hoſtell, there lined a Scholler famous for his learning, called Rowland, who being placed there by his friends, ſo profited, that hee grew to be one of the fellowes of the houſe, being in great eſtimation for the honeſtie of his life, and the excellency of his learning: hee was a man as well proportioned as hee was qualified: and

had as wel bona corporis, as he had bona animi, and could as well play the wagge and the wanton abroad, as hee could apply his Bookes and study at home: amorous he was, & one that delighted to feed his eye with every faire face, which after turned to his great prejudice, thus. It fortuned on a day in the summer season, that for recreation he walked as farre as Cherry-hinton, to eat a messe of Creame, where being very pleasant, as hee sate jesting with his Hostesse, there came in a Gentlemans daughter in the Towne, a mayd of exceeding beautie, so well proportioned in the lineaments of her face, that Nature seemed to trie in her an experiment of her cunning. This girle, as wise as she was faire, & as wanton as she was wittie, came in and questioned with the Hostesse about some businesse: Rowland seeing such a Nimph come sweeping in, thought either Venus or Diana had come in their country weeds to bewitch mens fancies: he cast his eye upon the excellency of her phisiognomy with such a piercing looke, that Loue entring by the eye, so wrong him at the heart, that forsooth fancy her of force he must.

Now my young Scholler could doe nothing but gaze upon her, for court her he could not vnlesse he should haue begun to woe her with some words of Art, or some Aristmes of Philosophie. The young Gentlewoman seeing the Scholler looke so earnestly upon her, began to blush, and so taking her leaue of the Hostesse went her way. The Scholler seeing her gone out of doores, thought of the olde prouerbe: Faint heart neuer won fayre Lady: and therefore called to her thus: fayre Gentlewoman, quoth he, you may see we Schollers haue little manners, that holding the pot in our hands, will not make such a sweet Saint as you drinke: how say you Gentlewoman, will it please you to pledge me? The wily wench hearing such a Schollerlike gratulation, seeing by this salute, that Schollers had read of Loue, more then they could say of Loue: and though they could tell what was Latin for a

fayre

fayre woman, yet could neither woe her, nor winne her, turned backe againe, and with a lowe curteſie thanked him. He off with his corner Cappe, (for he was a Batcheler in Artes) and with a glauncing looke drunke to her: Shee like a wanton, pledged him with a ſmile. Rowland at this taking heart at graſſe, kept to her, and tooke her by the hand, beginning thus to holde her in chat.

Your Towne here (forſooth) of Cherry-hinton, hath made me oft play the truant to come hither for Cheries, and as mine hoſtes can tell, full many a meſſe of Creams haue I eaten in her houſe, for we ſchollers are good companions, and loue to be pleaſant, eſpecially if wee might haue the company of ſuch a faire Gentlewoman as your ſelfe: Therefore Miſtris, if I chaunce to come to towne to eate a pound of Cherries (if I may be ſo bold) I would trouble you to take part with mee; and if I met you at Cambridge, the beſt Wine in the Towne ſhall be your welcome: the Wench (that had much adoe to kéepe her countenance) thought to feed him with her fayre ſpéeches, till ſhee made him as fat as a ſole, and therefore made him this reply. Truely ſir, indéed many Schollers come to Cherry hinton to eate Cherries: but Sir, you are the firſt man that euer I dranke withall: for Schollers be ſo full of their learning, & fine tearmes, that country wenches cannot vnderſtand them, but I for my part at the firſt ſight like of you ſo well, that if my leaſure ſerue, whenſoeuer you come and pleaſe to ſend for me, I will as long as I dare beare you company, but now forſooth time cals me away, and I muſt be gone. With all my heart quoth Rowland, but truely we muſt not part without a kiſſe, which ſhe willingly tooke at his hands, and went home: where aſſoone as ſhe came, ſhe reuealed all to a yong Gentleman that lay in her fathers houſe, who was ſore to her: they laughing heartily at the Schollers Courting, reſolued to make good ſport with him ere they had done. But Rowland hee that thought euery ſmile

was a fancie, and every mayd that laught on him, loued him, conjectured assuredly by the familiar curtesie of the Gentlewoman, that shee was greatly affectionated towards him: whereupon he began to enquire of his hostesse whose daughter she was, of what wealth her father was, what children hee had, and what Dowrie the mayd was like to haue to her portion, as a man resolued, the woman was already won, because shee had giuen him gracious fauours. The Hostesse as well as shee could, tolde him all: which done, he payed his shot, and went to Cambridge, where hee began altogether to muse on the beautie of his Mistresse, and to lay an hundred plots in his head what were best to be done: at last he resolued to send a letter to her, to signifie his loue: or else to go himselfe, and to carry two or three of his fellowes with him, and so to discourse vnto her how hee loued her; but at the last he fully determined with himselfe to write vnto her: wherefore taking Pen and Inke in his hand, wrote a Letter to her, to this effect.

Rowlands Letter to the fayre Mayd of Cherry-hinton.

Mistris Marian, Aristotle the great Philosopher, for all his wit was in loue with Hermia: and Socrates the sage, could not so farre subdue his passions, but that he fell in liking with Zantippa: Schollers as they read much of loue, so when they once fall in loue there is no hoe with them till they haue their loue. The finest glasse is most brittle, and the best Scholiers soonest ouergone with fancie. For an instance, was not Ouid as deepe in loue as he was excellent in learning? I bring in these comparisons, Mistris Marian, because the other Sunday being at Cherry-hinton, and seeing your sweet selfe, I was so ouertaken with your beautie, and good behauiour, that euer since the remembrance of your face could neuer out

of my fancie: nor, I thinke neuer shall, although I should be drenched in forgetfull flods of Lethe. Seeing then my affection is so great, I pray you consider of me, and be not vnkinde, but let mee haue loue for loue: and though here in the Vniuersitie you see me simple, yet my Parents at home are men of good parentage, and what I want in wealth, I shall supply in learning: Ponder with your selfe, and read but the liues and answeres of the Philosophers, and see how they vsed their wiues, with what curtesie, how euer the women were the most Maisters, and had the Soueraignty, which they desire. Thus hoping you will consider of my loue, desiring you to send me an answere, I bid you farewell.

Yours in dust and ashes, *Rowland.*

When he had thus finished this letter, he thought to shew himselfe somewhat poeticall, and thought a letter was not worth a rush vnlesse there were some verses at the latter end, and therefore hee affixed as a post-script this amorous ditty.

Rowlands song to his Mistris.

APproch in place Pierides,
My vaine in verse to bend:
Dame Chryseis which gau'st Homer sucke,
Thy tender teats me lend.

~~Alcmena thou vvhich Ioue didst rocke,~~
In cradle full of ioy:
Eke swathe me in those swadling clowts,
Account me for thy boy.

Yea Naiades and pretty Nimphs,
That on Parnassus dwell:
Lend me your Muse that I may now,
My Mistris beauty tell.

How

How that in beauty ſhe doth paſſe,
Venus the Queene of Loue:
To whom, if I doe gaine her grace,
I will be Turtle Doue.

Therefore my deere conceiue my griefe,
And thinke how I doe loue thee:
And in ſome lines ſend me reliefe
For time and truth ſhall proue me.

Thus hoping Pen and Paper ſhall
Thy minde to me ſhort tell:
But loue me as I doe loue thee
And ſo my deere farewell.

THus hauing both finiſhed his letter and his verſe, hée ſent them by a conuenient meſſenger the next later-day to Cherry-hinton, and that forſooth was his Hoſteſſe: who very orderly ſent for the Gentlewoman to her houſe, and deliuered the letters to her, with earneſt commendations from ſir Rowland. The Gentlewoman in outward ſhew ſéemed to accept them as gratefully, as hee ſent them louingly, and ſo hied her home: where preſently ſhee called for her new betrothed husband, and other Gentlemen her friends, and reuealed vnto them how ſhe had receiued letters from her new Louer the Scholler. All they flocked about her, to heare what excellent ſtuffe was contained in ſo learned a mans letter: but when they heard how like a Philoſophicall fole hee writ, they all in a Synode peremptorily concluded, that the greateſt Clarkes were not the wiſeſt men: and I marueil of that, quoth one of the company, for two reaſons: for the one, I haue heard this old ſaid ſaw, that loue makes men Orators, and affections whetteth on eloquence: ſecondly, there was none more amorous then Ouid (yet a profound Scholler) in ſo much that hee writ three Bookes de arte amandi, and

ſo

so did Anacreon, Tibullus, and Propertius. Yea but, quoth another, as they were schollers so were they wel brought vp in the Court, and knew as many externall matters, as they did inward Principles: but beware my maisters, when a Scholler is once brought vp in the Universities, and hath no other bringing vp but plaine ergo to plod in, nor conuerseth with none but his Bookes, and then hap to fall in loue, trust me hee will be as ignorant to woe as the Plough-man to dispute, thinking that womens fancies are won with figures, & their thoughts ouer-reacht with the quiddities of Art: but of all that euer I heard write, this setteth downe his minde the most simply: and therefore quoth Marian shall hee be answered as foolishly, for I my selfe will be Secretary. Nay quoth diuers of the Gentlemen, we wil put in our verdict with you: no quoth she, try but a womans wit: that's knauish enough quoth one of them, and stepping to her standish, she wrote thus.

Marian of *Cherry-hinton*, to Sir *Rowland* of *Cambridge*, health.

SWeet Sir Rowland, I receiued your letters, wherein I perceiue that Schollers in loue are like to a Sow in pig vnder the Apple-tree, which either hastily must haue a drab, or else lose their litter. If I bring in a Country comparison blame me not, in that I am a country wench, and haue none but plaine country Logicke, but whatsoeuer I write, I meane well. Indéede rightly you say, that the finest glasse is most brittle, and the best Schollers soonest pinched with Loue, which I thinke to be true: for assoone as euer I saw you, how your eyes wayted vpon my face, as an obiect of your delight, I toke you to be too wise, kinde and amorous: and therefore séeing euer since you haue béene passionate, it were great pittie that you should not haue for your paines (euen as we vse in a homely prouerbe) A country sacke full of Loue: and the rather you induce me to thinke well of you, that you bring

in the examples of Aristotle and Hermia, and of Socrates and Zantippa: whereby you seeme to promise, that I shall as they had, enioy the soueraignty; and that if I be like them in conditions, you will be as suffering as they in patience: yet will I neither be so proude towards you as Hermia, for she rid Aristotle with a snaffle, like a horse: nor so waspish as Zantippa, for shee crowned Socrates with a Chamber-pot, but betweene both: and so wishing you hope the best, I bid you farewell.

Yours neuer, if not euer, *Marian* of
Cherry-hinton.

After she had done her letter, that she might seeme to be no whit behind him in any good will: she leaned her head on her hand, and in a Poeticall furie writ her louer these verses.

Marians verses to Sir *Rowland*.

FEare not my deere the stormes of loue,
For they are passing sower:
And sometime sweet as hony comb,
And all within an hower.

Like to Sunne-shine Summers day,
When Phœbus shewes amaine:
And yet ere night from rawny clouds,
Doth fall a shower of raine:

So whatsoeuer chaunce betide,
Or whatsoeuer fall:
If Father frowne, or Mother chide.
Yet you must beare withall.

For why? the Cuckow doth not come,
In Aprill month more sure:
Then I will fixe my loue on thee,
For euer to endure.

Thus

Thus wiſhing thee to thinke on me,
In ſtudy or in ſtreet:
I bid you heartely farewell
Till we in *Cambridge* meet.

HAuing thus ended her ſong and the letter, ſhee cald the conuocation of the merry Gentleman, & ſhewed them her humour in proſe, and her vaine in verſe: aſking if ſhe had done it knauiſhly enough: yea quoth her betrothed huſband, and ſo exceeding well, that you ſhall ſtand for foure and twenty knaues till Chriſtmas next. Tuſh quoth another, womens wits are like Sheffield knines, for they are ſometimes ſo keene as they will cut a haire, and ſometime ſo blunt that they muſt goe to the grindſtone. That is (quoth the ſecond) when you perſwade them to ſilence or obedience, talke with them but in that doctrine, and they are meere dunces.

Thus they began to deſcant of womens wit: but the Gentlewoman wily enough left them all, and went and layd vp her letters till Saterday market: then ſhee went to his hoſtes, and deliuered them to her, earneſtly intreatting her, if ſhe ſaw ſir Rowland, to conuey that packet to him. The Hoſteſſe promiſed her to do it faithfully, and effectually: and away to Cambridge ſhee went, where ſcarce ſhe was ſet with her butter and her milke, but ſhee eſpied ſir Rowland come ſinging downe the Market hill, in his wide ſleeued Gowne, and his corner cap, ſhe needed not to call him, for he ſtraight found her out, and ſhe as ſone deliuered him the packet: ſir Rowland thankt her: and away he went to his ſtudy to read the contents: but it was ſo farre to Peters Hoſtell, and therefore he cald in at a Tauerne by the way for a pinte of Wine, & there he opened the Letter, which when he had read, he perceiued by the contents ſhee loued him: for he being ſimple, perceiued not how ſhe bobde-ſole with him: taking euery leſt for a ſentence, he thought himſelfe the maſter of al worldly

content, and that Fortune could not aduance him higher on her wheele, then to haue so faire a maid to his Paramour. Then viewed ouer her verses, and in a great passion prayed her Poetry, commended her wit: saying, for stature she was Iuno, for beauty Venus, for learning and qualities Pallas: thus in meditation of his letter, and his Loue, sate poore sir Rowland, from eight a clocke, till eleuen, and then hearing the Hostell Bell ring to dinner, for feare he should lose his halfe-penny chops, hee put vp his letter into his pocket, and went his way. After dinner he fell to his olde vaine: got alone to be solitary, and then sate ruminating on the good successe of his loues, accompting it rather to his profession, then his fortune, for hee thought none so faire, chaste, nor rich, but a scholler might win with his Logicke: thus hee passed ouer, day by day, in sending of letters to his loue, & diuers times resorting thither, but seldome could hee speake with her, for that she fained some excuse; onely when shee ment to laugh, then she was for his company. But it fell out, that one Saturday aboue the rest, sir Rowland met her in Cambridge, and finding her with other of her neighbours, saluted her, and would nedes welcome her to the Towne with a pinte of Wine, which she tooke very kindely, that she might soth him vp still in his vaine hope, and forsoth to the Tauerne she and her companions went with him, where they had good game at our Cambridge ioore: but Marian taking him aside, told him that her father and her mother had intelligence of their loues, and as farre as shee could coniecture, it was by his hostesse: therefore shee wild him not to make her priuy to his secrets any more, nor to come to Cherry-hinton but when she sent for him, which should be as often as opportunitie would serue, hoping, though her father now were no forward, yet in time he would consent, and specially if he saw him maister of Artes: with this the Scholler rested satisfied, and they dranke their Wine and departed. Thus betweene them

passed

paſſed on all the Summer, till the deepe of winter, about Chriſtmas, when ſhe on a time and the reſt of the Gentlemen, deſirous to be pleaſant, determined to haue ſome ſport with the Scholler, and ſo cauſed Marian to ſend a letter for him, that hee ſhould come that night and ſpeake with her: which ſhe did, and he (poore ſoule) no ſooner receiued it, but in all haſte hied him in the froſtie euening to Cherry-hinton, where when hée came, hée ſtraight ſpake with Marian, and ſhe wiſht him to ſtay in an old barne, while her father was at ſupper, and then ſhée would conuey him into a backe court, where he ſhould walke hard vnder the chamber doore, and then when her father were in bed ſhe would let him in. The Scholler ſtood there a while, and Marian came ſtrait and conducted him into a ſquare court, where Rowland reſted him till her father ſhould goe to bed. The night grew darke, and with that paſſing colde, ſo that Rowland waxed weary of his ſtanding, and wiſht that her father were in bed: there ſtood the poore Scholler ſhaking and trembling in his ioynts, till it was eleauen of the clocke: then ſaw he a light at the doore, and he heard Marian call him: oh bleſſed houre thought he, that now I ſhall goe both to a good fire and to my louer. Sir Rowland (quoth ſhe) be ſtill a while, my father and my mother is gone to bed, but my brother and two Gentlemen more, are vp at Cards, and they haue but a ſet to play, & then they will to their reſt: alas ſweet heart (quoth he) I am almoſt ſtarued for cold, yet the hope that I haue to enioy thy preſence, doth comfort me, that I take all things with patience. The Gentlemen that ſtood hard by and heard all this, laught at the Scholler, and vp they went againe to their chamber to be merry, but ſtill walkt poore Rowland, beating his hands about him for cold, and expecting ſtill when his louer ſhould call him: well, there he traueſt his ground ſtill like a pery-patetian, and only had the ſight of the heauens to contemplate, till it was about one of the clocke, and then came they all downe a-

gaine to laugh, and assone as hee saw the Candle at the chinke of the doore, he began to be comforted, and came thither, shaking and beating of his teeth so sore, that hee could not speake. Where are you sweet heart (quoth she) alas, how sory am I for thy distresse, thinke that the heart in my belly is as colde for griefe as thy ioynts are with the frost, faine would I haue thee come in, but the lasers will not part play, & so they sit still, therefore I hope thou wilt weigh my credit. Oh Marian (quoth he) and his teeth iarred one against another, that they could scarce vnderstand him, I am like to perish with cold, yet were it twice as frosty & the night thrise as long, I would walke here rather than procure thy disparagement: gramercy sweet loue (quoth she) and with that she bid him be still a while, and the Gentlemen all fell a laughing to heare how kind a fole the Scholler was, and with what patience he bid penuance: oh, quoth the one of them, that is but an experiment of his Philosophicall principles, for hee reades in Tully:

Non oportet sapientem in aduersis dolore concidere.

I (quoth the second) and Mimus Publius giues him this councell.

Aduersis proba, vt fortunam, cum necesse fuerit
Patienter insultantem feras.

You say well (quoth the third) but let him for me make instance of himselfe for such axiomes, I will rather be a warme fole, than so cold a Philosopher. Thus they gan descant vpon the poore Schollers miserie, till the clocke stroke three, and then as they were comming downe, they heard a noyse at the doore, which was this poore Rowland, creeping vnder the shede for warmth, his teeth beating so lowde, that they might heare them easily by the staires, all this moued not my young Mistresse to pittie, but encreased their laughter. Assone as hee heard them come down the stayres almost dead, he called out, who is there?

oh

oh ſweet heart, it is thy Marian, quoth ſhee. Then for Gods ſake, quoth Rowland, take pitty of my life, for I am almoſt dead, doe but open the doore, and let me ſit here vpon the ſtaires, that I may haue ſome ſhelter from the colde. Alas, quoth ſhee, ſweet loue, thou ſhalt and thou wilt, but when the doore is opened, it makes ſuch a noyſe that it wakens the whole houſe. Rather quoth hee, let me ſuffer death then you be diſcredited, for if I were to abide the ſtone of Siſiphus, the wheele of Ixion, the gripe of Prometheus, and the hunger of Tantalus, yet had I rather packet vp all theſe tortures with patience, than bring thy credite within the compaſſe of the leaſt preiudice: at this period ſhe left him, and vp they went, ſmiling at the conſtancie of Rowland. The Gentlemen they were ſléepie, and went to bed, and Marian (as farre as I can coniecture) though it were ſomewhat before the marriage, that night made tryall of her new betrothed husband, where from thence, ſhe lay with him till fire, and then it waxed day light, and ſhe roſe: and remembring her louer went downe, opened the doore, and found him almoſt ſenſleſſe: there wiping her eyes as though ſhee had wept, ſhée perſwaded him that ſhe was the moſt ſorrowfull woman in the world for his ſharpe froſtie night hee had ſuffered, proteſting ſhée was falne into an ague, for very feare and gréefe ſhée had taken to ſée him in ſuch diſtreſſe, and could by no meanes redreſſe it: but good Rowland (quoth ſhée) be content, hie thee to Cambridge, and take ſome hot brothes leſt by this meanes thou fall into a ſickeneſſe, and then for very ſorrow I die: no quoth Rowland, and hée could ſcarſe ſpeake or goe, feare not me, for the hope of thy after fauours will be a ſufficient comfort for mee: and with that taking his leaue, for his colde nights worke hée had a kiſſe, and ſo departed. Well, as weake as he was home he ſcambled, and got to his chamber, and diſcouered to a friend of his, how he was like to periſh of an extreame cold he had taken, if he did not ſo much

much for him as to get him a Phisition, who straight went and brought him a Doctor, that with inward potions, and outward oyles and baguents so wrought him, that he recouered him to his former health, although very hardly: for hee was so frozen in his ioynes, and so nipped in the muskels and sinewes, that if his Phisition had not béene good he had perished. It was almost a quarter of a yéere before Rowland was frolicke againe: in which time Marian thinking she had lost her louer with a nut, sent him a present of apples to winne him againe, which hée receiued so gratefully, that he valewed the worst of them worth a fellowship, eating them with such an extraordinarie taste, that hee imagined them as swéet as Ambrosia, and all, for that they came from his Marian. Thus continued Rowland in his amorous humor, vntill such times as Marian forsooth must be married, and for that it was Aduent, there was no asking in the Church, but they procured a Licence the day before. As she and the rest of her friends, which were inuited to the Nuptials, were merrily iesting, oh Lord (quoth she) I had almost forgot my selfe, to morrow must be the wedding, and the bride is yet at Cambridge: why Gentlemen, it were no bargaine if Rowland were not here, therefore quoth shee, I will send for him, and lay such a plot that hee shall be with vs all dinner, and yet taste none of our meat. I pray you quoth her husband, let vs sée your cunning in that. Alas quoth one of the Gentlemen, poore Rowland is credulous, and whatsoeuer Mistresse Marian saith, he thinks it is Gospel, but if he will be so simple as to thinke that his last nights worke is not a sufficient warning, he is worthy of whatsoeuer befals. Well vpon this Marian sent for him, and come he did in the euening: where, to make my tale short, she made him walke in his wonted station till one of the clocke, then shee let him in to a good fire, where hee well warmed himselfe, and she louingly sate by him, discoursing of the last nights worke that he abode so patiently:

at last shee commaunded the mayd to lay the cloath, that they might haue some quelque chose for a reare Supper, which they went busily about: for Rowland said, he was very hungry. As the cloth was layd, and they ready to sit downe, the wench came running in, and said that her master was rising, and seeing the light of the fire, was comming into the parlor. Alas, what shall I doe quoth Marian? hide me somewhere quoth Rowland, whiles hee be gone to bed. Come quoth she, here stands a new truncke and a large, come, skippe into it, and I will for a while rake vp the fire, and goe to bed while the olde man be fallen asleepe: with that Rowland whipt into the trunke, and shee lockt him in, and straight in a pleasant humour went to her new husband, where shee lay all night, and left Rowland safe shut vp for starting. Still lay he, expecting when she should come: but hearing nothing, extremly weary, for very griefe he fell asleepe till the next morning.

When the poore scholler awak't, and entred into consideration where he was, he began to be halfe in suspition that hee was mockt and abused: still he lay patiently till hee heard them of the house say, God morrow Pistrelle Marian, God send you a good day to day: the sunne shines fayre, you shall haue a cleere day to your wedding. This word went as colde to his heart as a knife, that Marian should be married, and hee made a fole, to suffer such disparagement of his credit: yet (as before) hee was patient in extreames, and so resolued with content to see the successe of his abuse. Well, to Church go the Bridegrome and the Brids, with all their friends attendants, and married they were with great solemnitie: this done, home they come to dinner, and after they were set and placed in the Parlour where this Trunke stood, they fell to their viands, which were very sumptuous. The Gentlemen bidding reach downe the Pig, the Capon, Goose, Swan, Turkey, Phesant, Bitour, Venison, and such daintie cates: all this heard Rowland, and being passing hungry,

wished he had a legge of the worst of them in his hand: still hee lay almost famished and smothered, till the tables were taken vp, and boords shifted, and they fell to daunting. All this heard Rowland, and hearing the musicke, fell aslæpe vntill supper time, and then hee awakt, and heard how they layd the Tables, and went to supper, where they were passing pleasant, and the more, for that they ment to make sport with Rowland after supper was done, which continued not long, for they made the more haste for that they meant to be merry. When the cloth was taken vp, the Bride fetch a great sigh: what wife quoth the Bridegroome, why sigh you? in a dumpe: repent you of the match? no, quoth she, but I haue a blot in my conscience, and now before you all I meane to reueale it. I was once beloued of a Cambridge Scholler, who loued mee entirely and suffered much for my sake: then from poynt to poynt shee recompted vnto them the whole discourse of the loues & fortunes passed betwæne Rowland and her, whereat the company had good sport.

A man he was quoth she, wise, proper and well proportioned: and for proofe, take this key, open that Truncke quoth shee, and you shall sée his picture.

Rowland hearing this, armd himselfe to suffer all, and so the Truncke was opened, and he rose out like Lazarus from his graue. God Lord quoth the company, what is this a spirit? In nomine Iesus vnde venis? Epurgatorio quoth Rowland. And with that all the company laught while they could sit: At last when they were weary with laughing Rowland had silence, he boldly sayd: Thus I am glad Gentlemen, that my mishap hath made you so merry, and that Mistresse Bride hath so large a plaine song to runne descant on, Caueat Emptor: this is but a Comedie, but looke for a Tragedie whensoeuer it falles. And so he went out of the doore sore ashamed that he had such a kindly scoffe. The company laught well, and hée patiently went home, thinking how fortunate a man he

should

should be, if hée might liue to reuenge. Rowland at this misfortune had an insight into the world, & began to waxe wiser, that in short time he became to haue as much knowledge in worldly affayres as in his booke, and was (for his good behauiour & pleasant wit) highly had in estimation, not onely amongst Schollers, but amongst Townesmen, that in all the Universitie he was called the Gentleman-like Scholler. Liuing thus in good credit, and yet discontented, because Fortune fauoured him with no opportunitie to reuenge: it so fell out at length, that Marian coming euery weéke to Cambridge, espyed among the schollers one whom shé cast her eye on, and thought him the properest man in the whole Universitie: Wel she counted it but a glaunce, and thought as lightly to passe it ouer as it sleightly entred: but shee found, Ioue, though hee entred in by graunt of curtesie, yet he would not be thrust out by force of extreamitie: insomuch that she could not content her selfe without, but with the sight of her new friend, which was done so manifestly that the Scholler perceiued it, and ayming at the fairest, on Saturday séeing her in the market, offered her a quart of Wine, which she toke very gratefully, and began to be very familiar with him, insomuch that before they past, force of Ioue made her so shamelesse, that shee was content to yéeld to his request, so that time and place would serue without the disparagement of her credit.

Upon this they concluded, that maister Awdrey (for so we will call him) should grow familiar with her husband, and by that meanes should haue a better meanes to the quieting of his minde. Upon this determination they departed, and he so brought it to passe, that not onely he was acquainted with her husband, but so familiar, that hee would carry Maister Awdrey often from Cambridge with him to Cherry-hinton, and I hope you doe imagine hee was no little welcome Guest to his wife: Being thus fitted in this in their passions, onely watching

watching for place, lingring off the time, at last it was concluded, that she should come on a Saturday to Cambridge, and faine to stay with a kinswoman of hers that dwelt in the Towne, and so lye with her all night: this stood for a sentence, and so the next weeke was decréd. In the meane time it so fell out, that master Awdrey and sir Rowland being of great acquaintance, and such priuat familiars, that nothing was holden too secret betwéene them. Master Awdrey smothering this ioy in himselfe, thought to partake it with his friend: and so as hee and sir Rowland were walking, he reuealed vnto him the loue that had past betwéene him and Marian, and on Saturday was the night when his posse should come into esse, desiring him to tel him where he might haue a house fit for such a purpose. Sir Rowland hearing this, smilde, which made master Awdrey to enquire the cause of his laughter: whereupon sitting downe vpon the grasse, hee began to recount vnto him the whole discourse of his loues with Marian, and what sundry abuses he suffered at her hand, to the great and vtter infamy of Schollers. M. Awdrey hearing this, sate a great while in a muse, at last he said, and will women be Crocodiles, to weepe rose-water and vinegar at one time, still to delay in extremes, to loue without reason, and hate without cause? Oh the folly of men to be such, to such painted sepulchers, whose painted sheaths hold leaden blades, whose skins are glorious like panthers, but haue deuouring paunches. By that God that drew that infortunate female from that fortunate Adam, I hate her as extreamely as I loued her earnestly: and I will not onely yeeld thée opportunitie to reuenge, but Ile ioyne issue with thée to performe it to the vttermost. At this Rowland was tickled with inward ioy, and taking Awdrey in his armes, protested such humble seruice for that friendly promise, as euer should lie in his abilitie to execute. Thus in this determination of reuenge they crost the fieldes to Trumpington: and there

they

they eate a messe of Creame, whither by chance came one of the Proctors, with whom both Rowland and Awdrey were very familiar: him they had in and made him as good chéere as such a simple Ale-house could afford, and there in private revealed to him all their practise, desiring his furtherance in the matter. The Proctor promised to do what in him lay for the execution of this merry action, and there amongst them they laying and confirming the plot, they went altogether home to Cambridge, where they past away the time pleasantly till Saturday came: and then according to promise was Marian there, & met with Awdrey, who entertained her with all the curtesie that hee could, spending the day at the Tauerne whiles night came, and then he carried her to the house appointed, such a Subaudi domus as was fit for such a purpose: and there they supt. In the meane time Rowland had sent a letter to her husband in Awdreys name, that his wife being not well, was faine to stay at her kinswomans all night, and desired him to come to her the next morning, and that her father and the rest of the Gentlemen would come with him, for that they should sée Rowland taken in bed with a pretty wench. This letter in all haste was conueyed to Cherry-hinton to her husband, who reading the contents waxed somewhat iealous, because hee had séene very familiar curtesie betweene Awdrey & his wife, and thought Schollers were slie fellowes, & could deuise many Sophistications to make a man a Cuckold, but he concealed his suspition to himselfe, and shewed the letter to his father in law, and the rest of the Gentlemen, who as they sorrowed his wife was not well, so they were all glad to sée such a comicall fortune of Rowland: her husband taking euery word for his aduantage, said, he would be there by foure of the clocke to sée Rowland taken vp. Thus they all agréed, and were gone by two of the clock, where we leaue them comming to Cambridge: & againe to Marian who after supper sate vp late, but Awdrey fild

her full of Wine till she was almost drunke, that she was very heavy, and desired to goe to bed, which she did, and was no sooner layd but shee fell asleepe, and Awdrey slipping out, put out the Candle and sent in Rowland, and bade him now go to his Mistris: he went into the chamber, and lockt the doore: and master Awdrey stole out of the house, and went to his chamber, leaving Rowland with his Paramour: where I thinke more for envy of the man, then for love of the woman, perhaps hee dubbe him one of Paris Priesthood, howsoever it was shee descried not how it was, but both fell asleepe: on the morrow by foure of the clocke was Marians husband, her father and the rest of the Gentlemen at Peters Hostell, where finding the gate open, they went to master Awdreyes chamber, and rapsed him up, who quickly slipping on his clothes, welcommed them, and went with them to find out the Proctor, who watching for their comming already, was with a dozen masters of Art well appointed walking in the Court-yard, and presently went his way with them, and came to the house where Rowland lay: the Proctor knockt, and bade open the doore: who is that quoth the good wife: the Proctor qd. he: open the doore and that quickly, or I will beat it downe: the good man came stumbling downe in his shirt, and the good wife was so amazed that shee could not remember to tell her goesse. The Proctor came in, and by the direction of Awdrey went straight up to the chamber: who be here, quoth the Proctor: none sir quoth he, but a stranger and his wife: beat it open with a Halbert quoth the Proctor: and with that for haste Marians husband ran against it, and the doore fell downe and he into the chamber: with that Rowland covered her close, and stepping out of the bed in his shirt, asked what they meant. Ah sir Rowland quoth the Proctor, I am sorry I have diseased you this morne, I thought full little to have found you here, what is the cause you lie out of the Hostel to night: truly sir quoth he, I was late.

late abroad this night, making merry with my friends, and so I was faine to take vp my lodging here. How do you sir Rowland qd. Marians husband & her father, I maruell we sée you not at Cherry-hinton. Oh masters quoth hee, when there is another Comedy to play, looke for me, but if you remember, I promist you a Tragedy first, when that is studied, I warrant I will visit you: poore Marian lying in bed, & hearing all this how she was betrayd, and had layn with Rowland all night, and how her father and her husband were there present, thought surely now Rowland to the vttermost would be reuenged vpon her, so that she fell into a great sweat for feare. The Proctor that had his lesson taught him, said, well sir Rowland, had it béene any other but you that had bene taken abroad & in such a suspected house, he should haue gone to the Towle-booth: but since you haue no other company, farewell. Awdrey iogd vpon Marians husband, & as they were ready to goe out of doore, tush M. Proctor qd. he, but I maruell you examine not who it is that lies with him, it may be a pretty wench. What? is there one lies with him? yea, mary is there sir qd. he, and with that stepping to the bed, threw off all the cloathes, and there lay his wife in her smocke.

Sante amen, quoth Rowland, who is heere?
Haue you seene such a chaunce this yeere?
What a Woodcocke come so soone,
From Cherry-hinton to Cambridge before noone,
And found a Cuckowes nest
Is this masters (in earnest or iniest?)
That Rowland so earely in a morne,
Should make a knaue weare a horne:
What man! be not agast,
For you cannot call backe that is past.

At this all the Schollers fell a laughing, and sir Rowland sate him downe in his shirt, and (to make the matter vp, that it might be a right blacke Santus) while they laught, cryed Cuckow. The Gentleman séeing his wife,

and

and the father his daughter, they were in such a maze, that they stood as men senseleſſe: they fell out a weeping, the Scholler a laughing, the Gentlemen a sighing, and still Rowland kept his wench, and cryed Cuckow: at last Rowland began thus. Why you my masters and friends of Cherry-hinton, did I not promise you a Tragedie, and haue I not now brought it to passe? I hope this Dame, and you all, remember my frollic night, and how I was brought out of the trunke: now am I not reuenged well? haue I not had my penny worths? Yes villaine (quoth the Gentleman) and first the whore shall die: and with that drawing out his Rapier, hee would haue kild her: but the Proctor stayd him, & she protested she knew not how shee came there, but thought shee had beene at home in her bed. Upon this all the Schollers perswaded the Gentleman, that Rowland did it by negromancie, and that if she were the honestest woman in the world, Magick were able to doe as much: Rowland for very pitty affirmde it: and so they perswaded him not to wade further in the matter for his owne credit, but to clap it vp with silence. She wept, and wrung her hands, and her father sate and shed teares: but at last by the perswasion of the Proctor, and the other Schollers, Rowland and hee for all this were made friends: his wife and he agreed, as a man perswaded shee was faultlesse, and that it was done by Negromancie: and so all merrily went to the Taverne and drunke, they going to the Colledge, and he to Cherry-hinton, with full resolution never more to let his wife come to Cambridge, for feare of the Schollers Art Magicke.

This Tale made them all heartely laugh, every one commending the pollicie of the Schollers that had inuented so good a reuenge. The Cobler he marked all very diligently, and swore there was not a more sound history for his turne in all the Legenda Aurea: well it made all

the

all the Barge merry, yet ſæing they began to be all in a dumpe, one cryed who is next: mary that am I quoth the ſcholler, and hee began to ſettle himſelfe: whom I can beſt deſcribe thus.

The deſcription of the Scholler.

A Man he vvas of a ſober looke,
Giuen much vnto his booke:
For his viſage vvas all pale,
As Clarkes tellen this tale,
That mickle ſtudy makes men leane
As vvell as doth a curſt queane.
Appollo radiant and ſheene,
His patterne long had beene:
For vvell skild vvas he
In verſes and in Poetry.
In palmeſtrie he had ſome lore,
In other Artes mickle more,
Mickle could he ſay at each ſteuen,
Of the liberall Artes ſeuen,
Of the Welken and the Axle-tree,
Whereon the heauens turnde bee:
Of Mercury and Charles vvaine,
And of the Beares twaine:
Caliſto and her ſonne conueyed thither,
Which to Sea-men ſhew the weather:
When Neptunus vvith his mace,
Will make ſmile Amphitrites face.
Many other matters of Sophiſtrie
Could this Clarke in ſecrecie.
He could alſo ſpeake of loue,
Of Paphos and of Venus doue,
And perhaps though he vvere a Clarke,
Yet he could skill in the darke
As vvell as a man of lay degree
To dally vvith a wench in priuitie.

His attire was all blacke,
But why doe I longer clacke?
This Clarke gan report
His ſtory in this ſort.

The Schollers Tale.

Contayning the ſundry misfortunes that two Sycilian Louers had, and how at the end their paſſionate ſorrowes came to a pleaſing ſucceſſe.

WHen the King of Tuniſe was beaten out of his Kingdome, and ſought to enter againe by force, Iacomine Pierro, and Alexander Bartolo, two Noble-men of Sicilia, and both of Palermo, for the good will they bare to the King, prepared certaine tall Barkes, and with their ayde maugre his enemies, placed the King againe ſafe in his Kingdome: which done, they returned againe to Palermo. This Iacomine Pierro had a ſonne called alſo Iacomine, and this Alexander had a daughter called Katherine, theſe two being neighbours-children fell in loue together, inſomuch, that Iacomine noting the beautie of Katherine, ſéeing with his eye her outward excellencie, and hearing with his eares her inward vertues and perfections, entred with ſuch déepe inſight into her qualities, that he reſolued in himſelfe, ſhe and none but ſhe, ſhould be the goddeſſe of his affections: and on the other ſide, Katherine féeding her eye with the deſired obiect of his perſon, and with delight pleaſing her eare with the generall fame that ran through all Sicilia of his curteſie, affabilitie, and valour, determined that none but Iacomine ſhould enioy the floure of her beautie. Theſe two louers being in ſuch a ſympathy of agréeing paſſions, liued a long while with lookes, baſhfull both to diſcouer the eſſence of their loues: yet at laſt Iacomine taking heart at graſſe, finding one day fit place and opportunitie, diſcourſed vnto her, how euer ſince his

his yéeres could entertaine any amorous thought, the Idea of her beautie and vertues remained imprinted in his heart so déepely, that none but thee could satisfie the end of his incessant desire: which was no other then the honest and honourable content of marriage. Katherine who was as willing as he was desirous, told him that vpon that condition, whensoeuer their parents should agrée, she was ready to be at his command. Thus they vowed and ended, and all in a short space, for that time parting with a kisse. This swéet consent of thoughts continued a long time betwéene these two louers, insomuch that Iacomine resolued shortly to breake the matter to her father, to whom hee knew the match would be most pleasing, for that olde Iacomine and Alexander loued together as brothers.

Whiles thus these two louers held their demaund in suspence, there fell a deadly iarre betwéene the house of the Iacomins, and the family of the Bartolos: in so much that not onely all Palermo, but almost all Sicilia was in an vproare: for each toke armes against other, and being men of great parentage, friends tooke parts, and they began to bandy, that they fell to a flat ciuill dissention. This disagrément betwéene the Parents, although it was a heart-breake to the two Louers, yet could it not at al disparage their affection, but the greater the mutinie, the déeper was the impression of their mindes. But by this meanes their méeting was hindred: yet loue being a priuy searcher of secrets, found them out a crenise betwéene two walles, which parted their houses, and there oft times they met & parled, hoping still some end would grow to this dismall dissention; but as the fire encreaseth with the winde, so this iarre grew greater by time, that the louers lost all hope euer to haue consent of Parents: in so much, that wholy in despayre of an vnitie, they concluded to forsake Sicilia and to go into Spayne, where they had both friends, and there to remaine till their families

were accorded. Vpon this resolution, Iacomine prouideth him a barke, & layd it ready in the hauen, and when the winde and weather was faire, gaue a watch-word to Katherine, and so got her aboord, hoised sailes, and away they made towards Spaine: they were not long gone, but they were missed, and by all possible coniectures knowne to be slipt away together, for diuers manifest instances were reported of their loues. The fathers fell both into deepe passions, Iacomine hauing but one sonne, and Bartolo but one daughter: yea the griefe of their vnkind departure did so worke in their fathers mindes, that each intended more mischiefe to other, as it were in reuenge, that the broiles grew hotter. But as they dissented, so these two louers accorded euery way, loking for no other hauen but the coast of Spaine: but Fortune that delights to sport her selfe in the variable accidents of loue, brought it thus to passe. They had not sailed three dayes from Sicilia, but that there fell a great calme, and certaine Gallies that were Rouers vnder the King of Tunise, espied this Sicilian ship: and thinking to haue some rich prize, made out, and gaue onset, commanding them to yéeld; the Sicilians, being calme, could not make way from them, but yet although too weake, stoutly denied to be boarded, and fought it out to the vttermost, chiefly Iacomine, who was sore wounded: but at last, they of the Gallies entred, and bestowed the Marriners vnder hatches, and then went to rifle the ship, where they found Katherine all blubbered with teares, & almost dead for feare, her they took for all her pittifull shrikes and cries, conueyed her into the Gallies: which Iaconime séeing, took so heauily, that he was ready to dye for griefe, but so sore he was hurt, that stirre he could not, but was faine to suffer her to be carried away, whither the mercy of the flames pleased to transport her: when they had rifled the ship and found nothing but passengers, away they went with fayre Katherine, determining with themselues to giue her for a present to the

King

King of Tunise, whom they knew did loue a fayre woman, more than halfe his Kingdome, and so faire a creature as Katherine they were sure hee neuer saw before. Upon this they made saile toward Tunise, and when they were arriued, the captaine of the Gallies causing her to dresse her in her richest attire, went with her to the kings place, where when he was admitted to his highnesse presence, humbly on his knees he craued pardon, as one that contrary to his maiesties lawes had bene a Rouer and a Pyrate on the Seas: but now loathing that course of life, was come to submit himselfe, and hauing taken that Gentlewoman as a prize at Sea, desired his Maiestie to accept her as a present. The King whiles the Pyrate tolde his tale, kept his eye still on the Gentlewoman, whose beauty hee found such, that hee thought her some heauenly creature, shrowded in some mortal carkas. The King not onely thanked the Pyrate for his present, but gaue him free pardon, and a letter of mart, with many other rich gifts, so that he returned richly rewarded, and then turning him to Katherine, he toke her in his armes, kist her, and gaue her such entertainement as in all royaltie he could. But nothing could make her cease off from teares, hauing still her Iacomine in remembrance, whom she held for dead: which the King perceiuing, commanded that she should be carryed to a place of his, standing fast by the Citty wall, and there placed and attended vpon with all diligence, vntill she might be comforted, and thither when it pleased him he would haue recourse. Seated in that house, there she led a solitary life, washing her cheekes euery day with teares for her poore Iacomine, who likewise wounded as he was, was brought to Tunise, and there left in the Surgeons hands, where hee was healed: Assone as he might well goe, he went as a man forlorne vp and downe the Citty, loking euery where if he might see his Katherine: whereupon hee resolued to passe from place to place, and so to end his dayes in trauell, if her

did not by narrow inquisition find her out: getting therefore his bag and baggage in a readinesse, hee was going out of Tunise: and as he passed out at the gates, hee cast his eye vp to the house where Katherine was, who at that time was looking out of a casement, hee espied her, and thinking it should be she, stood in a maze. Katherine seeing him, and thinking him to be her Iacomine, was almost ready to fall downe in a swound: thus stood the two Louers at gaze; at last Iacomine called Katherine: Iacomine (quoth she) & with that she clapt her fingers on her mouth and made a signe that for that time hee should depart. Backe againe went Iacomine to his Hostesse, as merry a man as might be, and there staid till it was something late in the euening, and then going to the place, sought round about the house, and there found a backe windowe into a garden, where they might conueniently talke, hee had not staied there long, but Katherine came to the window, & there, after a volley of sighes, quencht with teares, they began to discourse their fortunes since their departure. Katherine told vnto Iacomine how she was giuen by the Pirates to the King for a present, and how he had placed her there, reserving her for one of his Concubines, & that she looked euery houre, when he would come to deflowre her. Therefore (quoth she) since we are man and wife, and as we haue liued together, euen so let vs die together, and enioy thou the chastitie of that body, whose soule hath bene euer thine in all amitie: I respect not the King, nor what his tortures can doe, therefore at night come hither to this place, when it is darke, climbe vp on the wall, and so on this tree, and thou mayest easily come into the casement, which for the same purpose thou shalt finde open. At this motion Iacomine was glad, & so departed, and at the time appointed came: and being made more nimble by loue and desire, he lept vp the wall lightly, and so into the tree, & from thence into the casement, where he found his Katherine ready to receiue him: banquet him

the

she could not, least any might heare, but least he did with kisses, or whatsoeuer shee might afford to his amorous desires, so that in the end to bed they went, and there with pleasure recompenced their former misfortunes.

Loue hauing thus aduanced her Champion: Fortune enuying their happinesse, meant to haue one fling more at them, and brought it to passe, that the King that night resolued to haue the company of Katherine, and therefore after all his Lords were at rest, toke with him his Chamberlaine, and certaine of the Guard, and went to the place where she lay: comming in by a backe gate, hauing keyes for euery doore, at last opened the Chamber where she was, and there drawing the Curtaine to behold his Goddesse, he saw where shee lay with a young man in her armes fast asleepe: the King for anger was ready to haue kild them, but yet hee did qualifie his fury with a royall patience: and called his Chamberlaine, and the rest of the Guard, and shewed them this sight, demanding of them if any of them knew the young man: they all answered, no: but supposed he was some stranger. The king straight commanded, that certaine of his Guard should watch them, and assoone as they awak't, carry them to prison, & let there in the midst of the market place be erected a great stake, and in the afternoone there let them both be consumed with fire: the Guard obeyed the kings commandement, and he went away in great choller, and highly discontented. The King departed, these Louers slept sweetly till the morning, and then they awoke, where presently they heard a rustling of men, that straight tolde them how the King was there, what had happened; and what he had commaunded: therefore they made them rise, and then bound them, and carried them away. The two Louers were no whit dismayes at this newes, but embracing and kissing each other, comforted themselues in this, that they should as they liued together so die together, and that their soules nor bodies should neuer part.

Straight

Straight were they carried to prison, and the stake was a providing, whereupon the rumour of their burning came about the Cittie, that against the houre appointed all the cittie were gathered together, and forth at last was Iacomine and Katherine brought, and bound to the stake backe to backe: They earnestly desired that they might be bound face to face, but it could not be graunted, which grieued them: but they comforted themselues with chéerefull words, resolued to suffer death with patience. All the Cittie was gathered together, and stood gazing on them, and pitying them that so swéet a couple should fall in such fatall extremitie: the poore soules ashamed, and hanging downe their heads, expecting euery minute the beginning of their martyrdome. As thus the fire was ready to bée brought, came the Lord high Admirall of Tunise by, and séeing such a concourse, demaunded the cause: the people tolde him as much as they knew. Yee on his sot-cloth came to the stake, and loking vpon them, séeing them so louely, asked of them, of what Countrey they were? Of Sycilia sir, quoth Iacomine. With that the Admirall staring earnestly in his face, called to his remembrance the fauour of olde Iacomine his father. Of what place in Sycilia, my friend, quoth he? of Palermo: thy name quoth the Admiral? Iacomine quoth he: Why thou art not (answered the Lord) the sonne of Iacomin Pierro? yes quoth he: and this the daughter of Alexander Bartolo: And if quoth Iacomine, you knew these families, do but so much for vs as speake to the King that wee may be bound face to face, and so die, for life, that we hold in scorne. Although the tormentors were appoynted to dispatch them by an houre, yet the Lord Admirall charged them not to put any fire to the wood till his returne; which they promist, & away gallopt the Admirall as a mad man through the streets to the kings palace, where when he came, he found the king in a great rage discoursing to his Lords the villany of Katherine, that admitted a stranger into her. The

Admirall

Admirall without any great reuerence (as a man full of choller) began thus roughly and briefly. Can they which place kings pul downe kings? then loke thou once againe to be beaten out of Tunise: did Iacomine Pierro, & Alexander Bartolo, the two valiant Lords of Sicilia, by their force seat thée in thy kingdome, & now in reuenge doest thou burne the only issue of them both, for that two louers séeke the fruition of their loues? so shal we haue Sicilia our enemies, and thou séeke a new kingdome. What meanest thou to vse these railing spéeches, quoth the King? mary quoth the Admirall, yonder young Gentleman that is at the stake is the son of Iacomine, & she the daughter of Bartolo. At this the King stood in a maze, & was halfe afraid, so that he cryed out to his Lords, that they should run & bring the couple as they were to him, which they performed with all diligence. When Iacomine and Katherine saw the Nobles come, then they lokt for fire: but when they heard how they must be vnlosed, & how courteously they were intreated, hope of better fortune gaue them some comfort. Well, away they were carryed to the king, who gratiously entertaining them, demanded the cause of their bolde enterprise, & what fortune brought them into such a far countrey. Iacomine straight began to discourse their particular hap, and what accidents they had, whose children they were, and of their contrary fortunes. The King at this embraced them both, welcom'd them, & craued pardon of his rash censure, cladding them in royall apparell, and enriching them with many costly gifts, after solemnely married them in Tunise, and kept a great feast with turney & triumphs fitting their degrées, & after preparing a pretty fléte, sent them home to their parents by the Lord Admirall, whose arriuall in Palermo was wonderfull strange, in that all thought they were dead. But when they recounted to their parents their misfortunes, and lastly, the gracious fauours of the king of Tunise, by the helpe & good perswasion of the Lord Admiral:

the inſtance of their true loue reconciled their fathers and families, not onely the two louers agréd, but the two houſes euer after continued in peace and concord.

Aſſone as the Scholler had tolde his tale, euery man thankt him for his paines, and ſayd it was a pleaſant and a delightfull hiſtory: amongſt the reſt there was an old woman, who for very kindneſſe to heare of their hard haps, and the good fortunes of the louers, wept: why wéepe you mother quoth the Cobler: by my troth ſonne quoth ſhe, to thinke on the chaunces of loue which are ſo variable, and by the grace of God, if all in the Barge will giue me leaue, you ſhall heare an olde woman tell a tale that will make you all merry. Euery man deſired her to ſay on, and ſhe being a ſimple woman, as you ſhall perceiue by her deſcription, ſetled her ſelfe to talke thus.

The deſcription of the old woman.

CRooked was this beldame for age,
Huffe ſhouldred & of a wrinckled viſage.
And as her backe and neéke was crooked,
So was her noſe long and hooked.
Many furrowes in her brow,
Hairy and briſtled like a Sow.
She had a large tawny face,
And therein an ill fauoured grace.
She was mouthed like a ſparrow,
Gated like a wheele-barrow,
And of a long time beforne.
Not a tooth in her head had ſhe borne.
Yet could ſhe chew good Ale
For her noſe was nothing pale,
But with ſwinkind at her will,
She looked red about the gill.
Mickle talke ſhe had and Mickle chat
When with her Goſſips ſhe ſat.

That

That threeſcore yeeres before,
The bell for Goſſiping ſhe bore.
Her apparell was after the elder beere,
Her caſſocke aged ſome fiftie yeere.
Gray it was and long beforne,
The wooll from the threeds was worne.
A thrumbe hat ſhe had of red,
Like a buſhell on her head.
Her kercher hung from vnder her cap,
With a taile like a flie flap,
And tied it faſt with a whim wham,
Knit vp againe with a trim tram,
Much like an Ægiptian.
Her ſleeues blew her traine behinde
With ſiluer hookes was tuckde I finde.
Her ſhooes broad and forked before,
No ſuch I ſaw of yore.
This Beldame on her merrie pin.
Began her tale with this gin.

The olde wines tale.

Contayning the wily ſleights of a wanton wife, and how both cunningly and craftily to the ſafegard of her owne honeſtie, and her husbands diſcredit, ſhee ſhifted her louer.

IN a farre Countrey there dwelled ſometimes a Gentleman of good parentage, called Signior Mizaldo, who had to his wife a very fayre and beautifull Gentlewomen. And as the beaſts moſt grædily gaze at the Panthers ſkin, and the birds at the Peacockes plumes: ſo euery fayre feminine face is an adamant to draw the obiect of mens eyes to behold the beauties of women: experience proued it true in the wife of Mizaldo: for the being a woman of ſingular perfection and proportion, was generally loked on

and liked of all, but fauoured and loued especially of a yong Gentleman called Peter, dealing with such secrecy, that they continually satisfied their desires without giuing Signior Mizaldo the least occasion of suspition: and the meanes that they performed it with such secrecy was this. Euery weeke twise her husband rid from home about certaine his affayres, and shee very artificially neare to the high way, that leades to the towne where Peter lay, had placed an Asses head vpon a tree, and when her husband was gone forth, she turned the head towards the towne, but when he was at home, then she alwayes had it looking to her owne house: vsing herein (as some thought) an Embleme, saying, when she turned the Asses head forth, that the Asse her husband, with his long horning eares, was gone from home, & when it stood towards the house, that the Asse kept his chamber: but whatsoeuer in this her conceit was, Peter alwayes knew when to come, and euer when Mizaldo was from home resorted to his house. Now it chanced that certaine boyes comming by & seeing the Asses head stand there, threw stones at it, and hit it so often that at last they turned the Asses head toward the towne: which Peter walking abroad and spying, thought that Mizaldo had beene gone from home, and therefore at night walked towards his louers house, and comming to the doore finding it shut, according to his accustomed maner knockt, the good wife awak't, heard him, and was sore afrayd that her husband should breake him, and so lay still: by and by he knockt againe more loud: Mizaldo awoke, hearing this, asked his wife who it was that rapt at the doore, or what that knocking meant? Oh hust and quoth she, be still, it is a foule spirit that haunts this house, and yet hitherto we neuer durst reueale it, and it hath, thanks be to God, beene your good fortune neuer to heare it before: Mizaldo richer farre then hee was wise, blamed his wife, and askt her if it had done any harme, no quoth she for I haue learnd a charm to send it hence: Frier Rowland

taught

taught it me: and if it knocke againe you and I will goe downe together, and I will say my charme, and so we shall be at rest: Peter that thought some other friend had béene with his leman, taking it in scorne that her husband as he thought being from home, he should not be let in, knockt againe amaine. With that Mizaldo and his wife arose, lighted a candle, & went downe to the doore where Peter was: then she wisht her husband to kneele downe vpon his knées while shée sayd the charme; with that she began thus:

Spirit spirit get thee hence,
For here is no residence:
Here thou mayest not be
This night to trouble me:
For my husband and I
Safe in our beds must lie.
Therefore from hence go,
And trouble mee no mo.

Now husband quoth she, spit: and with that hee spit: and Peter laught heartily, and wisht he might spit out his téeth for being at home: This charme said she thrice ouer, and euery time made him spit, that Peter might be assuredly perswaded that her husband was at home. Vpon this Mizaldo and his wife went to bed, and heard the spirit no more: for Peter went laughing home to his lodging. Mizaldo could not sléepe this night nor many nights after, but still marueiling what this spirit should be, lay awake. Peter that once or twice thus was deceiued by the Asse head, because by some contrary mishap it was turned, deuised thus that euery night when Mizaldoes wife went to bed she should tie a string to her toe, and then leaue the end of it at the doore, so that when Peter came hee might awake her, and then if shee puld the string againe and tyed it fast, her husband was from home: if shee let it slip, then hee was in bed. Thus by the meanes of this string Mizaldo was oft made Cuckold, and sometimes when

when her husband was at home and in his sound slæpe, if Peter puld the string shee would rise and goe downe to him to the doore. At last so this game continued, that Mizaldos wife being fast aslæpe, and he rising to finde the Chamberpot stumbled vpon the string, and wondring what it meant, or to what end, groped easily, and found it tied to his wifes toe, and from thence reacht to the doore, he as simple as he was, coniectured that this was done to make him Cuckold, & therefore for that night said nothing: but against the next night had prouided a great Partizan by his bed side: and when his wife was fast aslæpe he vntyed the string, and tyed it to his owne toe: he had not long slumbred, but he felt the string pull easily, whereupon he knockt. Then did Mizaldo rise vp, put on his clothes, & toke the Partizan in his hand, and downe he went rustling that his wife wak't, and hearing him goe downe so easily, felt for the string that was at her toe, and mist it, whereupon shee perceiued her husband had found out the deceit, and whipping out of the bed, ran downe the staires: with that Mizaldo opened the doore and thought to haue taken Peter, but hé hauing a glance of him, being in a darke night, ranne away, and Mizaldo after him, and raised the watch, yet was Peter so light of foot that hee outran them all, and escapt. Mizaldos wife fearing the worst ran vp againe to her maid, and wild her to goe to her bed, and lie there, and to abide whatsoeuer her husband should doe to her, and shee would giue her a new gowne and a new petticoat: the wench was content, and went to her masters bed, scarce was she warme there, but vp came Mizaldo in a great rage, and straight laying downe his Partizan, fell to beating of his wife, and with a whipcoard all to lasht her body that the blood ran downe the sheets, and when he had done, in the darke groped, and found a payre of sheares, and clipt of all the haire of her head, and that done, opened the doore, and went his way. The wench almost kild with blowes and

sore

ſore payned with ſmart, lay ſtill as one in a trance: but as ſone as euer Mizaldo was gone: his wife aroſe, and ſhut the doore, and came to the wench, where ſhe comfor-ted and waſht her, and anoynted her, putting on cleane linnen vpon her, and layd cleane ſhéetes on the bed, and ſo ſate downe diſcontented at her worke: no ſoner did the day breake, but ſignior Mizaldo went with all ſpéd to his mother in law, and there reuealed to her and to his wiues brethren, how his wife had dealt with him, and how hee had puniſhed her: yet not ſufficiently, but was fully reſolued to bring her that day before the Magiſtrate, and ſo abſolutely to make a diuorce: the mother fell a wée-ping, and know'ing her owne fault when ſhe was yong, intreated her ſonnes that they would make a peace and attonement betwéene their ſiſter and her husband: they fell to exclaime againſt her, & ſaid, ſéeing ſhee was by her lightneſſe the diſcredit of their houſe, they would bee the firſt and the foremoſt in puniſhing ſuch groſſe offen-ces. Vpon this they went home with Mizaldo to his houſe and there comming vp the ſtaires, they found their ſiſter ſitting very ſad, the husband frowne, and brethren ſol-ded: but the mother whom nature more néerely touch't, ſayd, What chéere daughter? What ſtir is this betwéene your husband and you? what ſtirre quoth her daughter? mary I would you and my brethren had gone to my bu-rying when you went to my marriage, to wed me to a drunkard that all day goes out about whores and curte-zans, and at night comes home late, and perhaps not all night, as he hath done now, and ſo doe I ſit all day com-fortleſſe, and lie in the night like a widdow while hee is abroad with his ſtrumpets. And quoth the mother he is this morning come to your brethren and me, with an ent-try againſt you, that this night hee tooke you with a lem-mon at the doore, and how he found it out by a ſtring tied to your toe. Fie on him drunkard (quoth ſhe) theſe are his dreames when he lies tipled in the Tauerne: but I

marueil

marueil where he hath béene to night: Mary dame ſaid he, I feare mee your fleſh and your bones know to well, for I thinke you haue not one frée ſpot on your body, I ſo whipt you for your whoredome, & I thinke the ſhéets in the bed can witneſſe, and the haire I cut off your head can teſtifie. Now mother (quoth ſhe) and good brethren, ſée whether this be an errant drunkard, or not, to tel theſe fables, ſaying hee beat mee ſo this night, when hee toucht me not, before this time ſince yeſterday, nor came within theſe dores: where he ſayes the ſhéets are bloody, ſée brethren, ſée, they are cleane: for my ſkin, take view of it, if it be any way toucht: and for my hayre, ſée how faire and long it is: how hath he then done theſe prancks? alas, alas, he hath falne amongſt his whores in his drunkennes, and hath vſed them ſo, and now to the ſlander of mee, to the diſhonour of my friends, and the perpetuall infamy of our houſe, he hath thus (without cauſe) reuiled me, where ye ſée his owne lying tongue condemnes him. Mizaldo ſéeing neither his wifes hayre cut, nor her body any way bruiſed, fell into a great dumpe, wondring whether hee dreamt it, or no: inſomuch, that at laſt he aſkt, why wife, was I not this night at home? At home? in faith ſir no, but with ſome of your drabs, and I think you came home drunke. At this doubtfull demand, her brethren began to take her part, and ſéeing what he ſaid was falſe, and all her ſpéeches probable, they rayled on him in moſt bitter termes, and told him, in that he had married their ſiſter who was an honeſt woman, and by all meanes ſought to deprriue her of her good name (without cauſe) who ſhould be the protector of her honor, they would not put it vp vnreuenged, but would to the vttermoſt doe to him what iniurie the extremitie of the Law would afford. Vpon this the man ſéeing how in all things his wife had diſproued him, thought aſſuredly that hee was not at home the laſt night, and therefore deſired her to pardon him, and he would neuer after be taken in the like offence, and ſo vpon that, by her mother and her brethren they were

made

made friends, and euer after Peter and she with lesse suspition enioyed their loues.

The olde wife hauing tolde her tale, euery man began to commend the wit of the woman, who on the sudden is euer most quicke and pearcing, able so sone to yéeld a peremptory excuse, as the occasion is ministred. By that shee had told this tale, they were within sight of Graues-end: whereupon they thought to haue giuen ouer, but that a Sumner sate by, who was a pleasant fellow, and hee began thus. Gentlemen, séeing at the motion of the Cobler, we haue imitated olde Father Chaucer, hauing in our little Barge, as he had in his trauell, sundry tales, and amongst the rest the olde wiues Tale, that you shall not want the merriest tale of all, the Sumners, you shall heare what I can say, and to kéepe decorum, as the Cobler beganne with the Tale of the Pryor, I will end with one of the Abbot: they all thank'd him heartily, and he began thus. But first I must, as hitherto I haue done describe him.

The description of the Sumner.

THis Sumner was not very olde,
Of a countenance stout and bold,
That would against the truth wage,
For he had a shamelesse visage:
Squint eyde was he, and his head
Was bad hued, bloud red:
A nose he had that gan show
What liquor he loued I trow.
For he had before long seauen yeare,
Beene of the towne the Ale connere,
His face was full of pretious stone
Richer in Inde was neuer none:
For Rubie Pearle, and Chrysolite,
With them all his face was dight,
From the brow to the very chin,
Yet to drinke he would nere lin:

But ſwinked vvith all his might,
At euery houſe where he did ſit,
His conditions were fayre and good,
For why he vvas by the roode
Acquainted with rich and eke vvith poore,
And kend well euery kerne whore,
Or other wife that held no ſcorne,
To make her husband weare the horne.
Such a knaue he was indeed
That as true as my creed,
He cited euery woman to the law,
Euen for the vallew of a ſtraw,
And ſommon them to appeare,
At the bawdy Court as I leere,
Where for money the Sumner
Would all their faults cleere,
That they ſhould not appeare at all
Before the officiall.
A bawde he was, a tel-tale, and a knaue,
Sike another is ſelde to haue,
Vnleſſe a man ſhould hell rake,
There to finde out his make,
Yet gan he thus declare,
How the Abbot of Wickham did fare.

The Sumners tale.

Contayning the ſhifts that the Abbot made to haue his Loue, and how he rayſed a man from death.

IN Wickam there was an Abbot that was a man of a middle age, luſty and frolike, who coueted to acquaint himſelfe with all the faire wiues in the towne, in ſo much that euery man doubted of this iolly Clarke: yet hee made himſelfe holy, but doe what he could it might not clere the ſuſpition that the men of the towne had of him: Amongſt the reſt,

rest, he was acquainted with a Farmers wife, that was none of the wisest, and yet she had wit enough to beware of the Abbot: this Farmer exceeded all the rest, not only of the towne but of all the whole countrey about for iealousie, being so suspitious of his wife, that he would brooke none of his neighbors to come into his house, and if she glaunced her lookes neuer so little awry, he would straight beat her while he could stand ouer her, insomuch that the woman was weary of her life, and looked as a creature forlorne.

As she was one day walking in the fields about her businesse, the Abbot met her, who tooke her by the hand, & began to make loue to her; she was coy and fearefull: yet at last the Abbot gan to prattle: then she began to tell him how iealous her husband was, & how weary she was of her life. Tush (qd. the Abbot) care not for that, refer that matter to me, I wil strait cure him of his iealousie, if thou wilt be my paramour. So fore was the poore woman troubled with a iealous foole, that she was glad to grant what soeuer the Abbot would aske, so her husband might be mended of his fault: Make some excuse (quoth the Abbot) to send him to me to morrow, and let me alone: but whatsoeuer thou hearest is befallen him, feare not, all shall be wel. Upon that the Farmers wife & the Abbot parted, she vnto her house, he vnto his Cloyster, where he called one of the Monkes, in whom he did repose all his trust, and reuealed vnto him the whole matter, and what plot he had layd to bring his purpose to passe: the Monke condescended to doe whatsoeuer the Abbot should command, and so vpon this resolution they laughed: and the next day came the Farmer to the Abbot to haue an hie Masse said for one of his children that was sicke: the Abbot made much of him, and bade him to dinner, and subtilly at the last draught conueied a dormatiue potion into the cuppe, that presently after dinner hee fell into a dead sleepe, that his senses being gone, all

men thought he was dead: wherefore presently one of the Monkes ran to the good wife, and told her what had happened to her husband, she cryed out and wrung her hands, and tolde it to her neighbours: whereupon she and a great company both of men and women went to the Abbey, and there was he knit vp in his winding-sheet, the wife pittifully lamented, and the neighbours comforted her: the Abbot sayd he should be buried in their Abbey because he died there, & therefore in presence of them all solemnely buried him; which done, his wife like a sorowfull woman departed home to her house with her neighbours.

Assone as night came, the Abbot & the Monke (whom he had made priuy to his practise) went and cunningly toke him out of his graue, and carried him into a deepe dungeon, where he could see no light, and there let him lye starke naked, til such time as the potion had ended the operation and that he should wake. At length the Farmer awoke and stretching himselfe, finding that he was naked, and in a place loathsome, darke and feareful, he could not tell what to thinke, but blest himselfe, and said, Lord haue mercy vpon me, where am I? The Monke that was by, attired like a spirit, said, thou art dead, & in Purgatory. Dead? quoth the farmer, can dead men speake? Yes, quoth the Monke, and eat to, such meate & drinke as is appointed for the dead. This day in the morning thou didst die, and thy wife did bury thee in the Abbey, accompanied with all her neighbours: and I wretch, a spirit of purgatory am appoynted to torment thee without ceasing, for that in thy life time thou wert iealous, & didst misuse thy wife without cause: therefore I am appointed to bere thee threescore and ten yeres without ceasing, and with that hauing a whip in his hand, the Monke laid it on, and gaue him many a shrewde blow. At last he left him and went his way, and tolde the Abbot what he had done.

The Abbot as soone as conuenient leysure would serue, stole secretly to the farmers house, and there got to bed to

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the good wife, and euery night lay with her while her husband was in purgatory: and euery day the Monke went downe & allowed him a little pittance of meat and drink: but whipt him most miserably. At last the farmer grew to be maruelous penitent & repentant for his faults, swearing that if he were aliue againe, hee would neuer be iealous nor suspitious: earnestly praying his wife that she would forgiue him. While thus the poore Farmer was in his purgatory almost whipt to death, and famisht, the Abbot and his wife liued in all pleasure and iollity, laughing when they heard the Monke report what the poore man sayd in his purgatory: At last she perceiued that she was with childe, and therefore they must néeds haue a father to it, whereupon they deuised to haue him out of Purgatory, and to bring him home with a miracle. The next day the Monke came to him, according to his accustomed manner, and whipt him not, but told him that his wife euery day offered a Taper for him, & sayd so many good prayers, that his sins were remitted, & his punishment forgiuen: whereupon hee thanked his wife, and made a vow if God should restore him to life (as it was impossible) he would not onely leane to be iealous himselfe, but warne all other men to take héede of the like fault. Thus continued he without whipping by the space of fiue or sixe dayes, and at last the Monke, in stéed of drinke, gaue him an other dormatiue potion, so that he fell aslæpe.

Then the Abbot and the Monke in the night conueyed him into the place where he was buryed, & so let him lye. About the houre when he knew he would wake, was the Monke there sayning himselfe at prayer: and assone as euer he saw him stir, he ran away, & cryed out, vpon this all the Monkes of the Cloyster rose vp, and askt what the matter was. O quoth he, as I was in prayer by the Farmers graue, I heard a tumbling and a boyce there, eyther of him or a spirit, with that the Monkes went downe and found that there was one aliue within the Tombe: then they

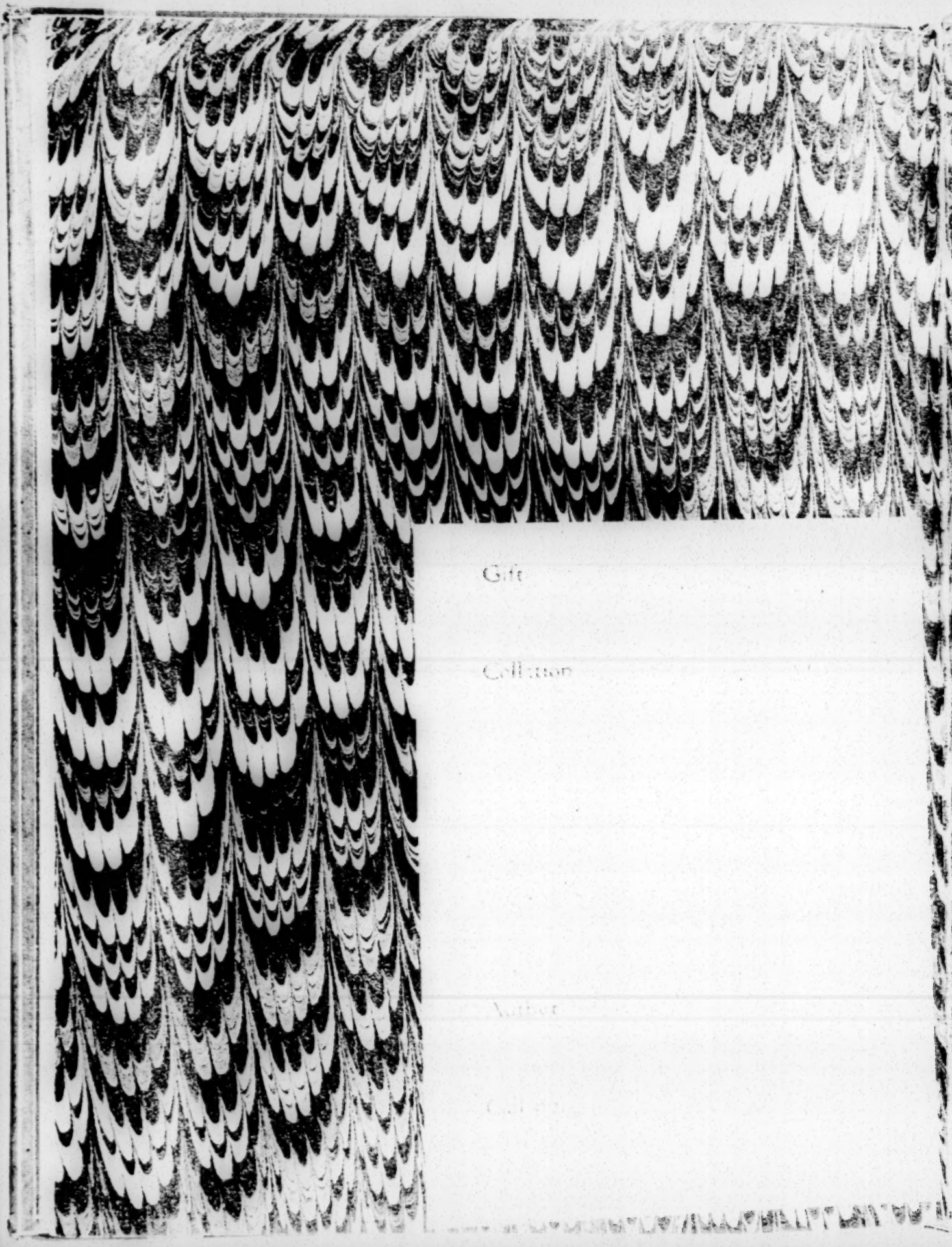
they called the Abbot, and tolde him, who slipping on his night-gowns, ran apace to sée the miracle: when he came thether, they were all gathered together, they lifted vp the stone, and there lay hee tumbling in his chest: so they toke him out and vndid him, & hee looked wan and gash, but spake to them, & told them, that the Lord at the prayers of his wife had restored him to life, & that he had béene in purgatory, and what punishment he had abidden for his iealousie. The Monks were proud of this miracle, & knew that their Abbey should be more famous for this strange wonder, & straight sent for wife & neighbours: who when they came, first the Abbot reuealed vnto them how that he & his Monkes hearing the continuall plaints and prayers the poore widdow made for him: he did likewise with earnest Orisons intreat of God, that if it were his will, he would shew a miracle on him, and restore him to life: and now my masters & friends quoth he, sée the difference betwéene the prayers of an Abbot, & the prayers of a lay man: for follow me, and you shall sée what effect they haue taken. With that he caried them into the parlour where the Farmer was, assoone as they saw him they were all amazed, and his wife fell downe in a sound: whereupon reuiuing her, he began to say, feare not wife, nor you gentle neighbours, and doubt not of mee, for I am by this holy man & my wifes prayers restored to life, hauing bene in that most vilde place of purgatory, where there is nothing but darkenesse and diuels: there was I tormented for all my sins, but especially for my iealousie, being euery day punisht till my wifes prayers released me: many a fable beside of his owne inuention did he tell them that he had séene in purgatory. At last as he was thus talking, his wife fell about his necke and kist him, and wept for ioy, and all the neighbours reioyced, and did reuerence to the Abbot for his holinesse. Vpon this he and the rest of the Monkes caried him home to his house solemnly with a procession, and there left him. This newes of a man restored to his

life

life againe by the Abbot of Wickham, spread through the whole countrey, that all men had him in admiration, as a man passing holy & vertuous, & diuers came to sée the Farmer from farre, to whom he did certifie what he had séene in purgatory, what great punishment for sundry sinnes, but especially for iealousie. Thus hee not onely exhorted all men from suspition of their wiues, but euer after gaue his wife such liberty, that she might at her owne pleasure be familiar with the Abbot.

The Sumner hauing told his tale, the people commended the great deuotion of the Abbot, wishing all iealous soules to passe the like purgatorie. The Cobler he commended all, & said, that they were now welcome to Grauel-end: euery man to his purse and looke in it for his two pence to pay his fare: and when they had done, they rose and went into the towne to drinke: and because they went most of them to Canterbury, they went all to one Inne, where they began to descant and discourse of the tales that had past: I can (quoth the Cobler) remember them all, and very nére verbatim collect & gather them together, which by the grace of God, Gentlemen, I meane to do, and then to set them out in a pamphlet vnder mine owne name, as an inuective against Tarltons newes out of Purgatory: and then if you please to send to the Printer, I will leaue a token, that euery one of you that tolde a tale, shall haue a booke for his labour. In the meane time, till I haue perfected it, ile lay my Coblers stoole aside, and my selfe become an Author, and I hope you shall finde me so sufficient in mine English, that if I should study, you would report, I might for my paine, match Lilly, Greene, or any other in excellency of prose: at this they all laught, payd their shot, and went with the merrie Cobler towards Canterbury.

FINIS.


Gift

Collation

Notes

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